

HISTORIC RESOURCES STUDY

City of Rocks National Reserve
Southcentral Idaho

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***HISTORIC RESOURCES STUDY
City of Rocks National Reserve
Southcentral Idaho***

Contract Number 1443-CX9000-93-031

Prepared for



**National Park Service
Pacific West Field Area
Columbia-Cascade System Support Office
Seattle, Washington**

by




Missoula, Montana

and

Amphion

Oakland, California

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- Figure 6. USDI National Park Service, *Eligibility/Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment for National Historic Trail Authorization*, Washington D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1987.
- Figure 7. Daniel J. Hutchison, Bureau of Land Management, and Larry R. Jones, Idaho State Historical Society, eds., *Emigrant Trails of Southern Idaho*, 1994, inside front cover.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Almo, Idaho is a remarkable community where the list of current inhabitants and property owners echoes that of the original homesteaders. Families have lived here for generations. They are tied by kinship, a shared agricultural livelihood, and, to a large extent, by shared religious beliefs. They care about the place, are versed in its history, and are eager to share what they know. HRA would like to thank the following individuals for their help and hospitality during the conduct of this project. Kathleen Durfee, a ranger at the City of Rocks National Reserve and descendant of area patriarchs Myron B. Durfee and Henry R. Cahoon, introduced us to her neighbors and provided invaluable assistance during the field survey and archival-source review. Third-generation area residents Jim Sheridan, Melbert Taylor, and Lyonal Mooso eloquently described their childhood near the City of Rocks, the region's agricultural development, and their concerns for the area's future. Charles Twitchell, long-time Elba resident, took the time to discuss with us his recollection of the travel corridors through the City of Rocks. Almo residents Marion and Bud Ward (the latter a "distant relation" of early settler Charles R. Ward), provided room and board and shared their recollections of the region from their lifelong tenure there.

National Park Service Historian, Gretchen Luxenberg (who served as the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative for this project), and others in the Pacific West Field Area, Columbia-Cascade System Support Office, conducted a thorough review of the draft HRS. Dr. Merle Wells of the Idaho State Historical Society also reviewed the draft document and generously shared information collected during the course of many decades of historical research relative to southern Idaho in general and the City of Rocks in particular. We appreciate the corrections, comments and suggestions received from all reviewers and hope that we have addressed their concerns in this final draft.

INTRODUCTION

Aridity and aridity alone, makes the various Wests one. The distinctive western plants and animals, the hard clarity ... of the western air, the look and location of western towns, the empty spaces that separate them, the way farms and ranches are either densely concentrated where water is plentiful or widely scattered where it is scarce, the pervasive presence of the federal government as landowner and land manager, ... those are all consequences, and by no means all the consequences, of aridity.¹

In September of 1994, Historical Research Associates, Inc. (HRA) contracted with the National Park Service, Pacific Northwest Region, to prepare an Historic Resources Study (HRS) of the City of Rocks National Reserve in southcentral Idaho (Contract No. 1443-CX9000-93-031).² The following HRS is derived from research in primary and secondary records related to travel routes, land use, settlement patterns, and infrastructure development. It is designed to provide a foundation for the formal evaluation and nomination of City of Rocks historic resources to the National Register of Historic Places. To this end, the project included a field review and the HRS concludes with the identification of extant resources within the boundaries of the reserve, arranged on the basis of shared historic association or "property type."

The HRS is also designed to address deficiencies in previously completed City of Rocks cultural resource studies. These deficiencies are the result of changing cultural resource management theories and practices and of changing management needs arising from increased use and an expanded land base.

In 1964, the National Park Service designated the City of Rocks a National Historic Landmark for its association with Overland Migration, roughly spanning the years 1843 through 1869. Emigrant inscriptions and vestiges of the California/Oregon Trail represented this historic use. Landmark status was expanded in 1974, with designation of the city as a National Natural Landmark. And, in 1988, Congress established the City of Rocks National Reserve, an area encompassing the city and California Trail ruts as well as land witness to the Kelton-Boise stage route, the free-range cattle industry, range wars, the birth of forest reserves, dryland and irrigated farming, and the growth of stable communities. This expanded land base demanded additional research in postmigration land use. Increased tourism, encouraged by establishment of the National Reserve and by the area's growing reputation as a climbing mecca, also necessitated a more carefully considered identification of those resources critical to our understanding of the historical use and significance of the region.

¹ Wallace Stegner, "Living Dry," *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs; Living and Writing in the West*, New York: Penguin Book, 1992, pp. 57-61.

² The City of Rocks National Reserve encompasses private, state and federal lands. Management of the reserve is undertaken through a cooperative agreement between the National Park Service and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.

Finally, cultural resource managers are placing increased emphasis upon cultural landscapes — on the totality of resources that formed a system of land use or that now form a multiple-layer depiction of use over time. Natural features (as they influence cultural development), vegetation, land use patterns, and circulation systems are a few of the important elements of cultural landscapes. Addressing these elements resulted in a modified assessment of the character of National Register eligible cultural resources within the reserve.

HRA's research and survey methodology is presented in Section 2.0 of the following report. Section 3.0 contains a brief description of the physical characteristics of the reserve. The historical context forms Section 4.0, and HRA's management summary and identification of known extant resources is presented in Section 5.0. The report concludes with an annotated bibliography (Section 6.0).

METHODOLOGY

■ ***Historical Research***

HRA relied exclusively upon secondary sources for information on American Indian use and habitation and on the fur-trade era. Compilations of emigrant diaries, assembled during previous City of Rocks cultural resource investigations (Haines 1972; Wells 1992), provided the bulk of information on the emigrant experience and on the character and location of alternate routes. The remaining information was derived from a variety of sources, including published and unpublished manuscripts, aerial photographs, cultural resource reports, census documents, historic maps, patent files, United States Geological Service and General Land Office publications and archival records, oral histories, autobiographies, local histories, historic photographs, and newspaper clipping files. These documents are described in the Annotated Bibliography (Section 6.0).

HRA also relied upon a collection of oral history interviews conducted with residents of the Grouse Creek Valley of northern Utah, 20 miles south of the project area. We deemed this use appropriate for a variety of reasons. The topography, elevation, climate, soil types, and agricultural orientation are remarkably similar. As importantly, Grouse Creek was the southern component of the Raft River and Cassia stakes of the Mormon Church. Grouse Creek residents remembered that "headquarters for all our religious layout come in from that way ... [We] had a lot of communication with Raft River but not so much from the South."³ Thus cultural and geographic boundaries of the City of Rocks region embrace Grouse Creek; only political boundaries exclude it.

Although the boundaries of the national reserve define the limits to the field survey and to the federal government's cultural resource management responsibilities, it was impractical to confine the historic context study to this land unit. The City of Rock's most long-standing usage has been as livestock summer range, the high-elevation component of a larger land-use system that included the irrigable lower elevation valleys east and west of the reserve, as well as the commercial and social hubs of Albion, Almo, Elba, Junction Valley, and Oakley. This larger community forms the geographical parameters of the following historic context.

■ ***Field Survey***

Information derived from a review of aerial photographs, patent records, and site forms prepared by David & Jennifer Chance and Associates (1989) guided the HRA field survey, completed in April and May of 1995. Field personnel attempted to locate and document "potential" resources identified during this document review. Field personnel also assessed the larger cultural patterns manifest in the landscape. HRA's investigation of setting and landscape included

³ Valison Tanner, interviewed by Verna Richardson, August 22, 1973, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, Fife Folklore Society, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, p. 27.

documentation of natural features, vegetation, circulation systems, views and vistas, landscape dividers, and site furnishings.

■ *Gaps in Current Research*

Some details of the historical development of the City of Rocks National Reserve and the surrounding area have yet to be clarified. Some questions will be difficult to answer, thus care should be taken to present an unbiased accounting during interpretive efforts. Others simply represent gaps in current research, which can be addressed through either additional documentary or field efforts.

- Long-time residents are as firmly committed to the veracity of Almo Massacre accounts as historians are to its unlikelihood. Dialogue with the Shoshone/Bannock regarding the incident should be continued and all interpretive use and discussion of the incident should carefully acknowledge the conflicting accounts. The incident also provides an opportunity to discuss the extent to which the "Indian Menace" came to symbolize emigrants' fear of the West. Accounts of Indian depredations greatly exceed those of death by disease or drowning, despite the fact that these latter fates were much more common.
- There is conflicting information regarding the actual route of the California Trail from the Raft River Valley into the Circle Creek basin. It may be sufficient to say that travelers on the various overland trails did not proceed single file along one alignment. Like water flowing in a braided stream channel, emigrants followed a variety of roughly parallel paths.
- Patent files and oral histories clearly establish that City of Rocks residents left their claims during the winter months (homestead legislation allowed a five-month absence per year). However, it is unclear to what degree this absence was compelled by snow and the need to secure schooling and wage labor, to what extent absence from the homestead continued during the summer months, and to what extent this absence was due to Mormon settlement patterns.
- When writing their memoirs, the first Mormon settlers suggest that they settled in southern Idaho at the behest of the Mormon church: "many of the families here have been requested [by the church] to move to Oakley, Idaho and build up the Goose Creek Country";⁴ "the Mormon church sent colonies of people into Idaho to establish church communities";⁵ "my duties seemed to call me to assist in opening up some new localities."⁶

⁴ John Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's settlement south of Almo," [title assigned by HRA], Manuscript 2/463, on file at Idaho Historical Society, Boise, Idaho, no date, p. 12.

⁵ Etta V. Taylor, "Some Historical Highlights of Almo and Raft River Valley," Manuscript 2/1136, Idaho
(continued...)

This pattern of carefully controlled expansion of the Mormon domain is well documented in northern Arizona, in Utah, and in extreme southeastern Idaho. However, there is little evidence in the secondary sources that Brigham Young encouraged settlement of the Snake River region, and much evidence that these settlers came of their own volition, at the behest of friends and family. This inconsistency in the primary sources has not been resolved. However, there is no question but that, *once established*, the church actively supported these communities.

- The reserve once contained at least 15 residential improvements associated with farming and ranching endeavors. Today, only two of these complexes (the James Moon and William Tracy homesteads) contain above-ground building remains — and these remains are in ruin. In all other instances, evidence of improvements and habitation are limited to artifact scatters — sometimes in association with foundation remains. Artifacts observed during the 1995 field survey include domestic and architectural items that appear to be typical of the first two decades of the 1900s. These historic sites possess some interpretive value as place-markers of human habitation. However, their information potential, and thus their eligibility under National Register criterion D, has not been assessed. Data retrieval (controlled surface collection and/or sub-surface testing) could determine the potential of these sites to yield information that is not available from documentary sources.

■ ***Project Personnel***

HRA Associate Archaeologist Janene M. Caywood served as the primary point of contact with the National Park Service, directed the field survey, prepared the management summary, and edited the final report. Caywood was joined in the field by landscape architect Cheryl Miller of Amphion. Project Historian Ann Hubber of HRA conducted the historical research and prepared the historic context. Carol Conrad of HRA produced the final report.

(...continued)

Historical Society, Boise, Idaho, no date, p. 15.

⁶ Journal and Letters of James Stapleton Lewis, ca. 1891-1901, Manuscript 130, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah, p. 24.

NATURAL HISTORY OF THE CITY OF ROCKS

*Erosional forms ... carved in granite ... [are] enclosed in a large basin .. entirely hidden from view on the west and partly hidden from the east... [The basin] is the site of a maze of weirdly carved forms scattered aimlessly about the basin ... Their distribution is not uniform, but resembles scattered villages or hamlets with more widely scattered forms between.*⁷

The City of Rocks National Reserve is located in southcentral Idaho, 30 miles south of the Snake River Canyon and 2 miles north of the Utah border (Figures 1 and 2). It lies within the southern end of the Albion Mountains, and is characterized by extreme topographic relief. Steep, heavily dissected, north/south-oriented ridges and free-standing knobs typify the area. Drainages are steep, rocky, and, for the most part, ephemeral. The summit of Graham Peak (elev. 8857'), located at the north end of the reserve, is the highest point within the reserve. Intermittent Graham Creek flows across the northeast corner of the reserve, to the Almo Valley. The west slope of Smoky Mountain (elev. 7520'), a large, free-standing erosional form, dominates the east boundary, and the Cedar Hills are located adjacent to the southern boundary.

From north to south, the reserve contains two, relatively large, gently sloping, basins — each drained by an eastward flowing tributary of the Raft River. Beginning at the north end of the reserve, the Circle Creek basin draws water from three tributaries, North, Center, and South creeks. This basin contains a large concentration of granitic outcrops and monoliths that inspired the name of City of Rocks. It also contains one of the most reliable water sources within the reserve, was a favored campsite location for emigrants on the California Trail, and was the location of the earliest homestead withdrawal in the area.

The second, unnamed basin is located slightly southwest of Circle Creek — separated from the latter by a wide, low, ridge. This wide basin (incorporating about 600 acres of gently sloping land) is drained by several intermittent water courses, which join to form a single channel that flows through Heath Canyon at the base of the south side of Smoky Mountain. The moderate slope of the land, coupled with comparatively deep loamy soil, proved attractive to the dryland farmers — the settlers during the historical period. At one time this basin contained four homesites (on Enlarged Homestead claims), and various irrigation improvements (associated with a Desert Land entry).

⁷ Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology, *Bulletin #14: Geology and Mineral Resources of Eastern Cassia County, Idaho*, (Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho, 1931), p. 18.



--- CALIFORNIA TRAIL

..... OREGON TRAIL

oooooo SALT LAKE ALTERNATE

REGION CITY OF ROCKS NATIONAL RESERVE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

003 • 20035A • DSC • MAY 94

Figure 1. Region map, City of Rocks National Reserve (map prepared by USDI National Park Service, 1994).

TO
TWIN FALLS
(34 MILES)



VICINITY

CITY OF ROCKS NATIONAL RESERVE

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

003 • 20033C • DSC • MAY 94

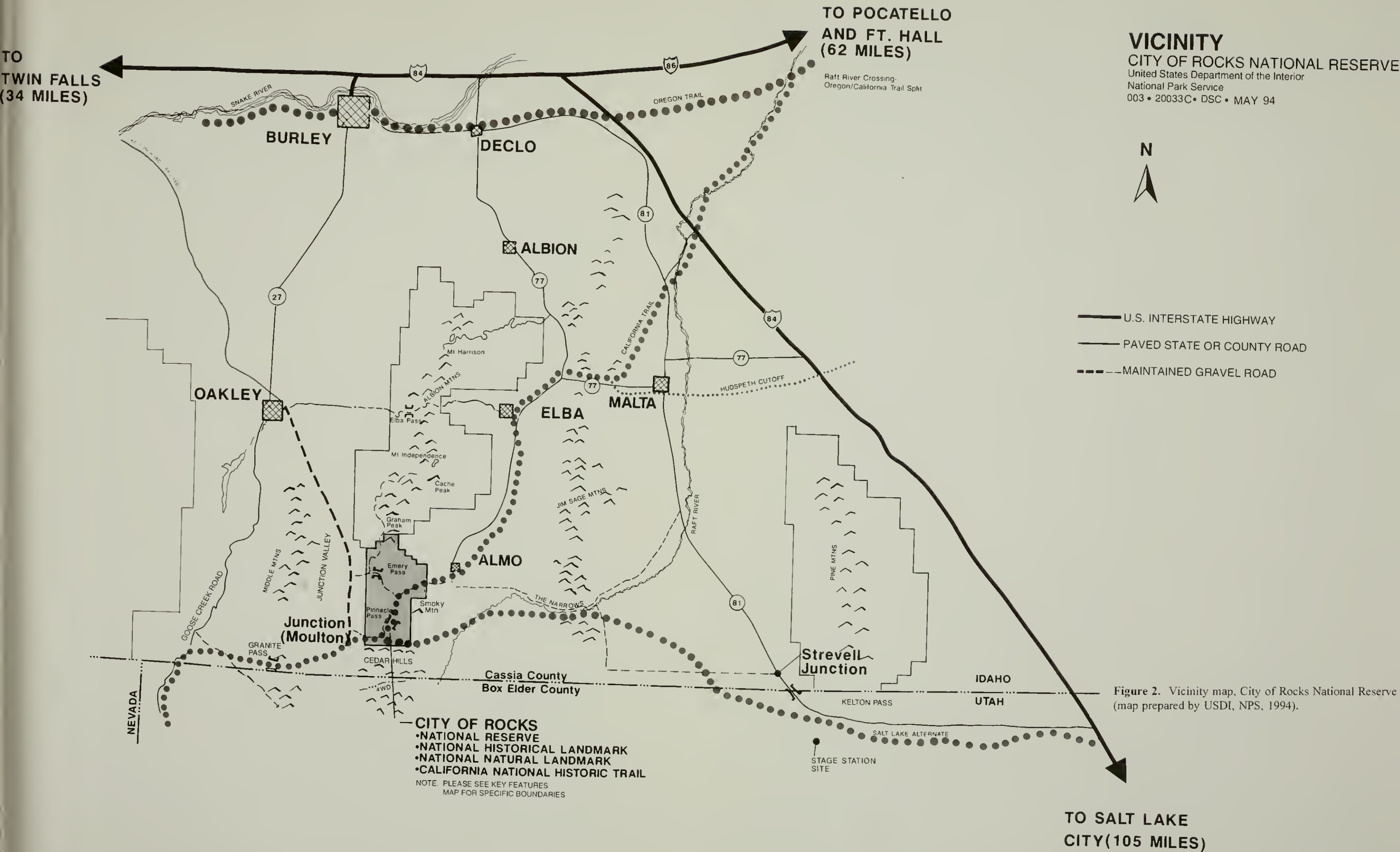
N



- U.S. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY
- PAVED STATE OR COUNTY ROAD
- - - MAINTAINED GRAVEL ROAD

Figure 2. Vicinity map, City of Rocks National Reserve
(map prepared by USDI, NPS, 1994).

TO SALT LAKE
CITY(105 MILES)



The Twin Sisters, a free-standing granite formation (known as a *bornhardt*) that figures prominently in emigrant diaries, stands at the southern edge of this second basin (Figure 3). The tallest twin (6838') rises 750 feet above the basin floor. This formation is located midway along a narrow eroded ridge that extends southeast from the mountain that forms the west boundary of the basin. A series of smaller monoliths outcrop along the eastern toeslope of this mountain, forming an arc that rims the west edge of the basin floor. Pinnacle Pass, lying one-half mile southeast of the Twin Sisters in the same ridge system, funneled California Trail travelers into the next drainage south — out of the City of Rocks and towards the junction of the California Trail and the Salt Lake Alternate. Emery Canyon, flowing west from the crest of the Albion Mountains, provides a northwest entrance to the City.

Utah juniper, mountain mahogany, Limber pine, piñon pine, and aspen grow "promiscuously" on the low grass- and sage-covered foothills surrounding and encompassing the City of Rocks. The aspen, found along streams and hidden springs, serve as neon signs to water. Piñon pine provided American Indians with a critical food source; Limber pine, juniper, and mahogany provided Euroamerican settlers with sources of fuel and fence posts. At approximately 6,200 feet, Douglas fir, lodgepole pine, and alpine fir grow along the north and east slopes of the mountains. The farmers and ranchers of Cassia County depended upon this forest for building and fence construction and maintenance material and for employment during the fallow fall and winter months.⁸

Once interspersed with abundant bunch grass, black or big sage (*Artemisia tridentata*) is now the dominant vegetation in lower elevations of the reserve and on adjacent United States Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) range land. Crested wheatgrass, seeded during range improvement projects initiated in the 1950s, provides much of the stock feed. With the exception of natural meadows along the creek bottoms, the range is "fairly steep ..., [with] lots of surface rock." Historically, it supported livestock from late April until November, with the high elevation extremes greening by mid-May.⁹

⁸ William McCoy, Forest Supervisor, "Report for Forest Atlas, Minidoka National Forest Idaho-Utah," 1/13/1909, File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (through 1923), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho, pp. 4-5.

⁹ *The Cattle Drives of David Shirk*, September 1871, quoted in Merle W. Wells, "History of the City of Rocks," 1990, report prepared for David and Jennifer Chance and Associates for submittal to the Pacific Northwest Region of the National Park Service, Seattle, Washington, Appendix II, p. 11; United States Forest Service, "Range Appraisal Report. Sublett, Black Pine and Raft River Divisions Comprising the Raft River Unit Minidoka National Forest," 1923, File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (through 1923), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho, passim.

Figure 3. View of Twin Sisters from Kelton Road, 1943 (Idaho State Historical Society photograph).



The City of Rocks, at the center of the semi-arid West, has an average precipitation of under eleven inches, three less than the minimum needed for profitable dryland farming. Much of this precipitation falls as snow during the winter season that extends from October until April. The growing season in the lowland valleys averages a scant 140 days; in the uplands the season is even shorter, initiated by late June and terminated by the frequent hard freezes of late September.¹⁰

The Mormon farming and ranching communities of Oakley, Elba, Almo, and Junction Valley surround the city. Oakley is 17 miles distant and is accessed along a dirt road through the City of Rocks and Emery Canyon, or by leaving the city by the south gate at the Twin Sisters, and circling the west flank of the Albion Mountains along Birch Creek. Elba and Almo are located eight miles north and three miles east, respectively, of the City of Rocks, in the substantial Raft River Valley. A rough road running along the north slope of Mount Independence connects Oakley and Elba. "Junction Valley" describes the scattered ranches (once punctuated by the towns of Moulton and of Lynn) southwest of the City of Rocks and across the Idaho border to northern Utah. The general alignment of the California Trail, now a county road, connects Junction Valley with the City of Rocks.

¹⁰ Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology, *Bulletin #14*, p. vii; *The Idaho Encyclopedia*, Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, compiler, (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1938), p. 259; Diary of Frederick Hugh Ottley, 1880-1952, Manuscript #1836, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY OF ROCKS REGION

Introduction

History tells of `Granite City' where the immigrant wagons rolled, indian massacres, rattling of stage coaches and of hidden gold. I wish to tell of the simple life and dreams of these settlers who came in around the year of 1910. Water was usually dug for by a shovel and it wasn't far from the surface; and the sage brush grew high and a horseman could ride through without being seen.¹¹

Distinct historic themes pertinent to the City of Rocks National Reserve include American Indian habitation, the fur trade, westward migration, the development of national and regional transportation networks, agricultural development, and recreation and tourism. Stories of conflict between Indians and newcomers, stagecoach bandits, and range wars represented fleeting moments in the history of the region. However, because they personify the Wild West, these events captured the imagination of local residents and of visitors, and stories thereof have been repeated and embellished accordingly. Overland migration was similarly fleeting, yet ultimately led to the settlement of the West, to homestead legislation, and to the growth of agricultural communities — the region's most consistent and long term land use in the post-settlement era.

The local agricultural industry followed a progression witnessed throughout the semi-arid West. The early open-range cattle industry was devastated by the winter of 1889 and disrupted by the arrival of "wool growers" and farmers. Early (ca. 1880-1900) homesteaders laid claim to irrigable land in the valley bottoms; small-scale irrigated farming was supplemented with cattle or sheep ranching. Stock grazed during the summer months on public land and were pastured (and fed) throughout the winter on the home ranch. Later settlers were relegated to dryland and grazing tracts, patented under the terms of the Enlarged Homestead, Forest Homestead, or Stockraising Homestead acts. The regional drought beginning ca. 1917 and the depression of the 1920s and 1930s resulted in the whole-scale exodus of this later community. By the 1930s, recreational use of the "beautiful" but unwatered and unproductive land was seen as the logical economic alternative to farming.

Three threads link all phases of area development: **Water** (or the lack thereof) brought the fur traders and the emigrants, and determined the physical characteristics and the success or failure of area farms. **Transportation** routes (or the lack thereof) have had a causative and resultant impact on the history of the region: the City of Rocks was at center stage of a phenomenal national

¹¹ Alta Mooso Weldon, "Homesteaders at the City of Rocks," unpublished typescript on file at Cassia County Historical Society, Burley, Idaho, no date [nd] p. 1.

emigration. Yet the transcontinental railroad and the interstate highway system — neither of which is dependent upon the presence of water, grass, or gentle grades — have passed the region by. The unique **natural features** of the region elicited extensive comment from westward emigrants. For those who settled and stayed, the City of Rocks has served as a community picnic ground, a point of geographic reference, and a cultural compass bearing on the importance of their community in the history of the nation and of the West (Figure 4).

American Indian Use and Habitation¹²

The City of Rocks National Reserve occupies an area at the junction of two physiographic regions, the Great Basin and the Columbia Plateau, at the northern margin of what anthropologists call the Great Basin "culture area." The concept of culture area, as used by anthropologists for some time, is generally defined as a geographical area within which native inhabitants share similar cultural traits. Strengthening the concept of cultural relatedness within the Great Basin culture area is the fact that all but one of the extant native groups living within it speak "Numic" languages, a division of the Uto-Aztecan language family.¹³

Of course, people inhabiting the periphery of "culture areas" often display a blend of traits from adjacent areas. The Shoshone and Bannock people who occupied the upper Snake River Valley at the time of Euroamerican contact displayed a blend of cultural traits typically associated with Plains, Great Basin and Plateau cultures. "Just as the environment and resources of southern Idaho were varied and transitional to other physiographic areas, so also was the culture of the Shoshone and Bannock diverse."¹⁴

In September of 1776, Francisco Atanasio Dominguez and Silvestre Velez Escalante explored the region extending from Santa Fe to Utah Lake (near what is now Provo). Here they camped with the "Comanche" (Shoshone).¹⁵ In 1805, the Lewis and Clark expedition camped near Lemhi Pass with another Shoshone band. Lewis made extensive notes regarding the material culture and vocabulary of the Shoshone people that they encountered. Lewis' lack of comment on the

¹² As established in the Scope of Work, this is an abbreviated discussion. HRA has made no contact with cultural representatives of the Shoshone or Bannock tribes. Prehistoric and American Indian sites were excluded from the field inventory. This subject will be addressed in a future study by the National Park Service.

¹³ Warren L. D'Azevedo, "Introduction," in *Handbook of North American Indians, Volume II, Great Basin*, (Smithsonian Institution, Government Printing Office, 1986), p. 289.

¹⁴ Robert F. Murphy and Yolanda Murphy, "Northern Shoshone and Bannock," in *Handbook of North American Indians, Volume II, Great Basin*, p. 289.





¹⁵ Merle Wells, untitled manuscript, on file at the National Park Service, Pacific Northwest System Support Office, Seattle, Washington, p. 12.

KEY FEATURES

CITY OF ROCKS NATIONAL RESERVE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
003 • 20038B • DSC • MAY 94

IMPORTANT FEATURES

-  SILENT CITY OF ROCKS
-  CALIFORNIA TRAIL
-  SALT LAKE ALTERNATE TRAIL
-  GRAVEL ROAD
-  PAVED ROAD
-  STEEP SLOPE
-  NATIONAL RESERVE BOUNDARY
-  NATIONAL NATURAL LANDMARK BOUNDARY
-  NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK BOUNDARY

KEY ROCKS

- 1 BREADLOAVES
- 2 BATH
- 3 TURTLE
- 4 REGISTER
- 5 TREASURE
- 6 CAMP
- 7 ELEPHANT
- 8 TWIN SISTERS
- 9 CASTLE
- 10 PARKING LOT

KEY AREAS

- A INSCRIPTION ROCKS CULTURAL AREA
- B NICHOLSON RANCH HOUSE /CIRCLE CREEK RANCH
- C CIRCLE CREEK BASIN/TRAIL ENCAMPMENT AREA
- D TWIN SISTERS RIDGE
- E PINNACLE PASS
- F STAGE STOP CULTURAL AREA
- G GRANITE PASS
- H INDIAN GROVE
- I GRAHAM CREEK DRAINAGE
- J TWIN SISTERS BASIN

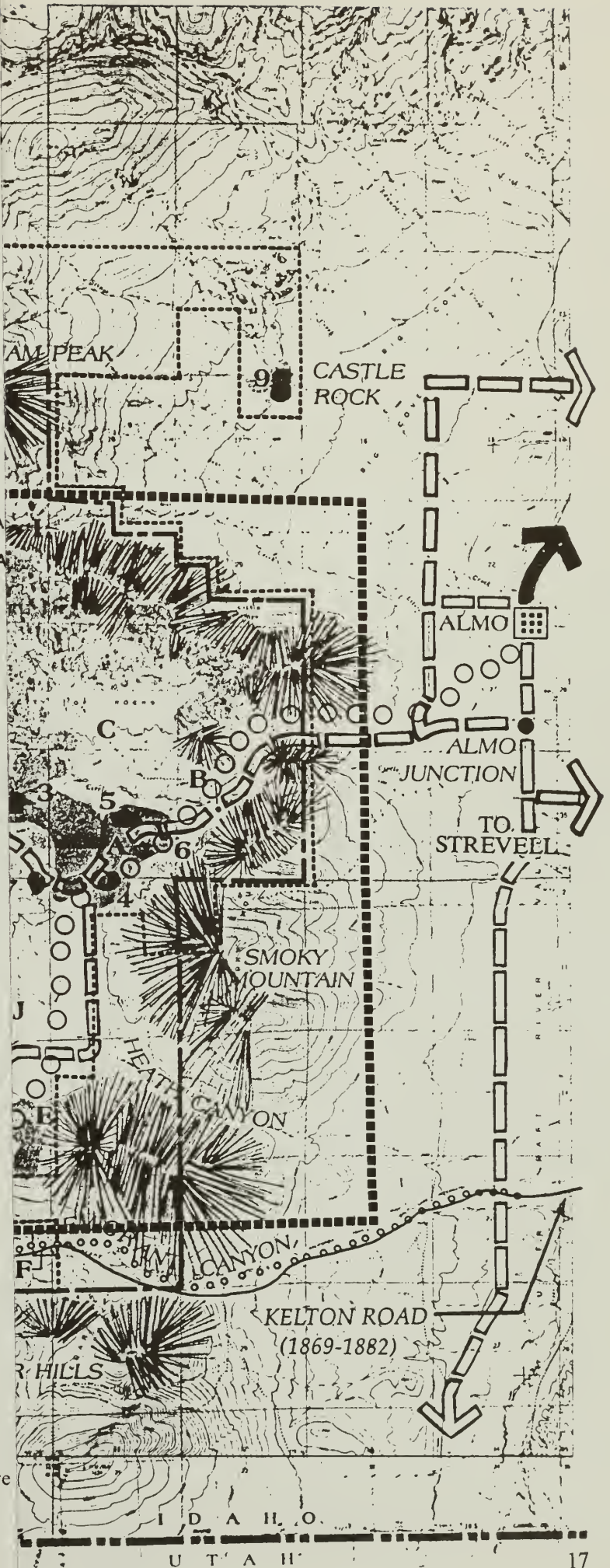
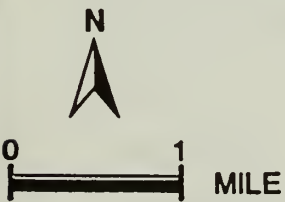






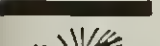

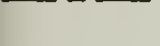

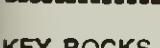
Figure 4. Key Features, City of Rocks National Reserve (map prepared by USDI, NPS, 1994).

KEY FEATURES

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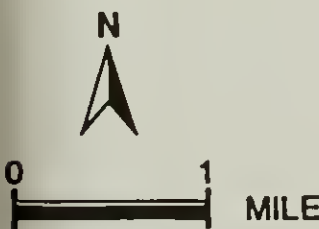
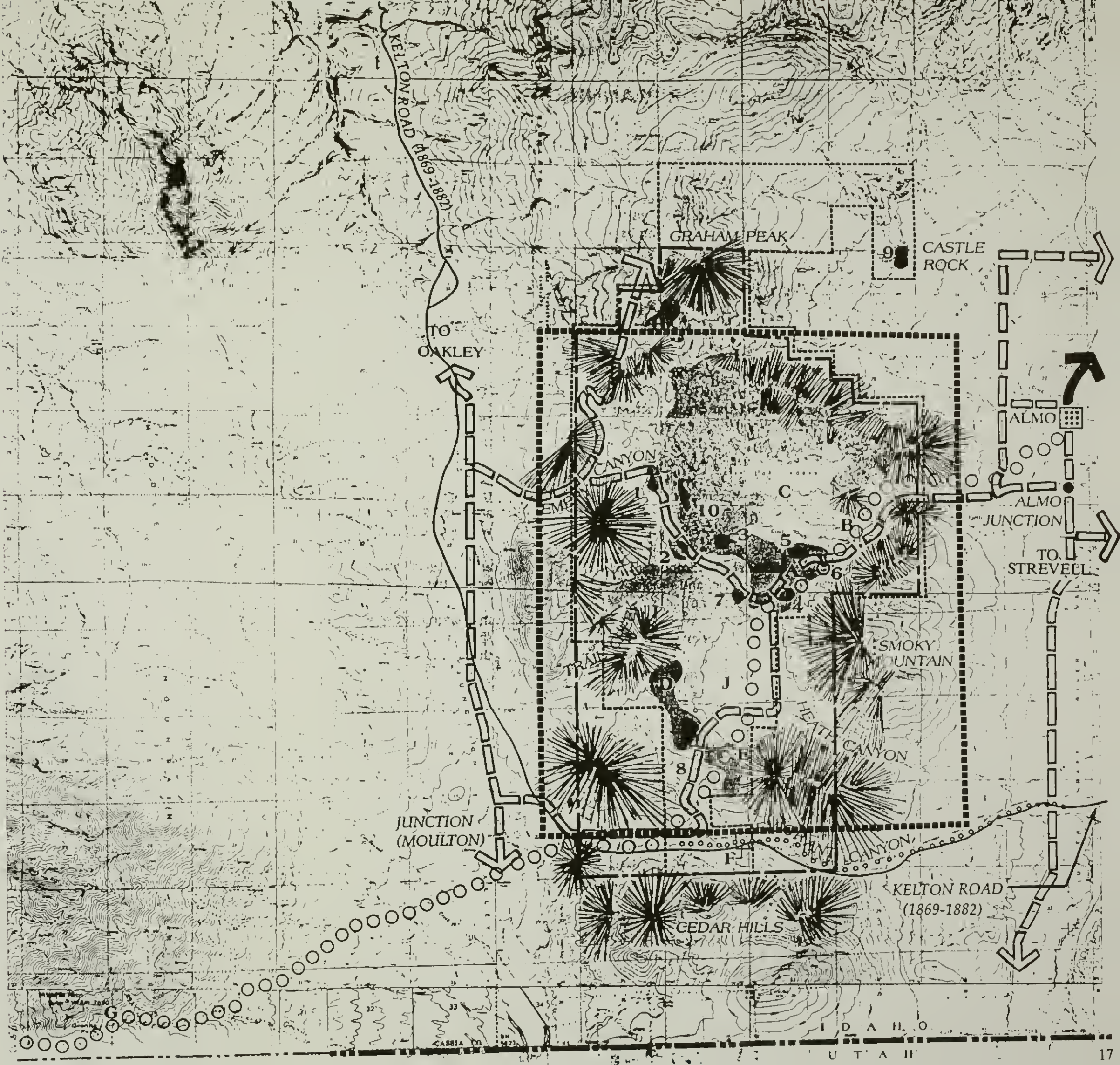


Figure 4. Key Features, City of Rocks National Reserve
(map prepared by USDI, NPS, 1994).



presence of Bannock people has led to the assumption that the residential integration of Shoshone and Bannock people occurred during the later part of the 1800s.

The relationship of the Northern Shoshone and Bannock, observed by ethnographers during the first part of the 20th century, is described as follows:

The Fort Hall, or upper Snake River, Shoshone and Bannock formed into large composite bands of shifting composition and leadership. The Shoshone speakers were always the majority, but the chieftaincy was sometimes held by a Bannock. Most of the Fort Hall people formed into a single group each fall to hunt buffalo east of Bozeman, Montana, and returned to the Snake River bottomlands near Fort Hall for the winter... The large bands split into smaller units for spring salmon fishing below Shoshone Falls, and summer was spent digging camas roots in Camas Prairie and other favored places. Deer and elk were hunted in the mountains of southeastern Idaho and northern Utah.¹⁶

Because of its excellent grazing resources, pinion pine nuts, rock chucks and game animals, and vegetable roots, the upper Raft River and the City of Rocks served as a "Shoshoni seasonal village center" and summer range for the Shoshone's extensive horse herds.¹⁷ Also residents reported that as late as the 1970s,

The Indians [from the Fort Hall Reservation] used to come every fall gathering pine nuts. They would gather the cones all day, then dig huge pits, fill them with wood and set it on fire. Then when the coals were right, they put the sticky cones in and covered them with dirt. By morning the cones would be popped open. The squaws picked the nuts out of the cones. They would sell them for .25 a pint.... every year, 'til the last few years, they come and traded back and forth with people for hides and on the years that the pine nuts were good.... they come by car. Then they first come, they come in a buggy and team, wagon and team. And camp here, they'd have a camp right here, right above here for weeks at a time... They'd come here and buy deer hides... They trades us buckskin gloves for deer hides. See and then they make the gloves out of the deer hides.¹⁸

Years after their consolidation on the government reserve at Fort Hall, the Bannock-Shoshone would return for "ceremonial dances. Their camp grounds were near the Twin Sisters as there was a spring of cold running water close by."¹⁹ Non-Indian settlers also report an "Indian

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 288.

¹⁷ Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), pp. 2-3.

¹⁸ Emma Lucy Smith Mikesell, *A Pause for Reflection*, Daughter of Utah Pioneers Cassia County Company, Virginia Estes compiler, (Provo, Utah: J. Grant Stevenson Publishers, 1977), p. 69. See also, Jake and Ida Bruesch, interviewed by A. W. Dawson, May 16, 1974, Oral History #180, Idaho State Historical Society Library and Archives, Boise, Idaho. (Copyright held by Cassia County Historical Society, Burley, Idaho; restrictions on reproduction.)

¹⁹ "History of City of Rocks Relived as Bliss Students Visit Oakley Area," *Times News* (no place of publication indicated), 10/18/1964, Vertical File: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS, n.p.

legend" centered at the City of Rocks, namely that "a bath in [Bathtub Rock] before sunrise will restore youth to the aged."²⁰ Evidence of the city's traditional significance thus continued long after ranching enterprises had transformed the area.²¹

Fur Trade and Exploration

*I got safe home from the Snake Cuntre...and when that Cuntre will see me again the Beaver will have Gould skin.*²²

The Raft River Valley formed an important transportation link between the heavily trapped Snake and Bear rivers. Between 1820 and 1830, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) also heavily trapped the Raft River, as part of their general policy to decimate beaver populations in the area of joint British/American occupation established in 1818. Despite this proximity, City of Rocks was not the focus of the trappers' attention and is neither described nor mentioned in passing in the trappers' accounts.

In 1811 an expedition of the Pacific Fur Company, led by Wilson Price Hunt and Donald Mackenzie, traveled down the Snake River, past its confluence with the Raft River, enroute to their new Pacific coast trading post at Astoria. Although Mackenzie was convinced that the Snake country's beaver population was considerable, the difficulty of that 1811 journey discouraged further exploration of the Snake River and its tributaries until 1818.²³

In that year, Mackenzie, a new partner in the nascent North West Company, led the first "Snake Country Brigade" into an area extending from Fort Nez Perce south as far as the Green River and east as far as the Bear River. By 1820, Mackenzie had established a system of mobile trapping and summer rendezvous that incorporated the Upper Raft River region, near the City of Rocks. Subsequent incursions into this heretofore unexplored region were made by the Hudson Bay Company's Finian McDonald and Micel Bourdon in 1823, whose trapping grounds included the Upper Raft River and tributary creeks and by the HBC's Alexander Ross, whose brigade camped near the City of Rocks in 1824. (Ross did not proceed beyond this camp, noting a negative cost-benefit ratio to further trapping in the rugged country. Despite his proximity to the City of Rocks,

²⁰ Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's settlement south of Almo," p. 105.

²¹ Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 12.

²² Finian McDonald (1823) quoted in Gloria Griffen Cline, *Peter Skene Ogden and the Hudson's Bay Company* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974), p. 46. [HRA has elected to use the original spelling and punctuation for the italic quotes. We have not used the term "sic" in order to provide easier reading.]

²³ Wells, untitled document, p. 17.

and his keen interest in geography, Ross failed to mention the city in his diary, suggesting that he had neither seen nor heard of the geographic oddity.)²⁴

Peter Skene Ogden assumed control of Ross' Snake brigade in 1824, at a time when competition from American trappers lent incentive to further exploration of the Raft River's tributaries. (His brigade of 1825 consisted of "fifty-eight men who were equipped with 61 guns, 268 horses, and 352 traps as well as a number of women and children, families of some of the freemen who were always part of such expeditions.") In 1826, Ogden's party discovered Granite Pass; their westward journey to the pass would have placed them very near the City of Rocks. Ogden's successor John Work also explored the Goose Creek country between Junction Valley and Granite Pass yet also did not pass through the City, or failed to describe it. By 1832, Work concluded that the region immediately west of the Raft River "lacked enough beaver to justify further attention (Figure 5)."²⁵

Like the emigrants that would follow them, fur traders did not travel through the region uncontested: service with the Snake River Brigade was considered "the most hazardous and disagreeable office in the Indian country." During Finian McDonald and Micel Bourdon's 1823 Snake River expedition, Bourdon and five others were killed. Upon his return, McDonald wrote, "I got safe home from the Snake Cuntre...and when that Cuntre will see me again the Beaver will have Gould skin."²⁶

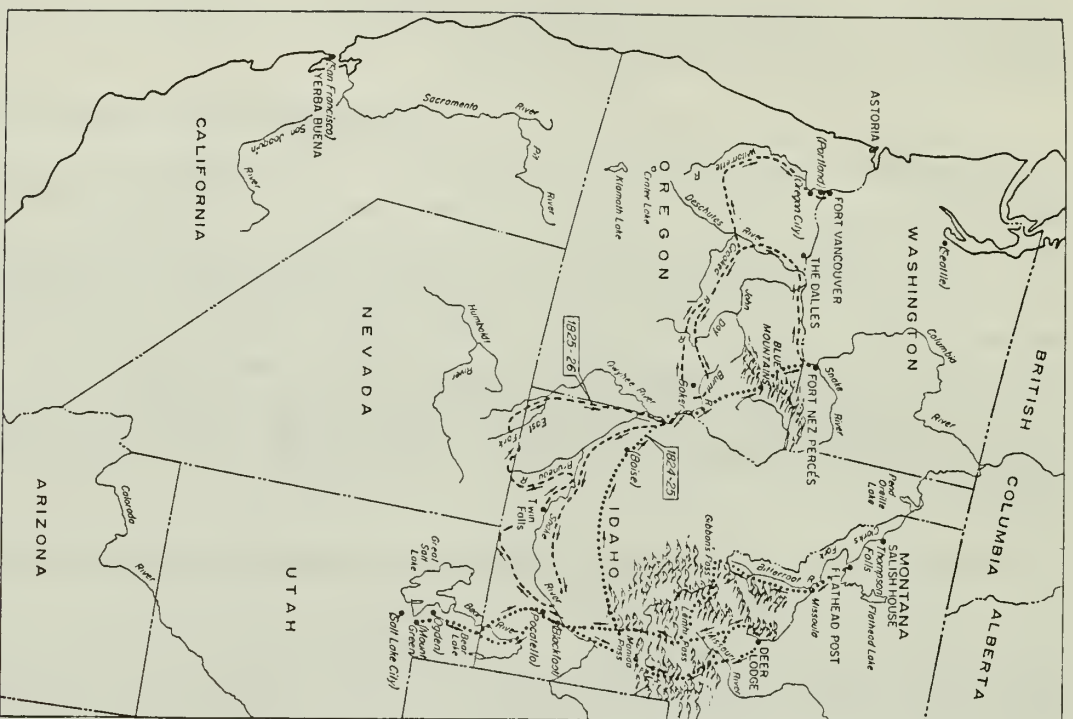
Although the fur trade had no immediate effect upon the City of Rocks, geographical discoveries made during that era had an important and lasting effect on the region. For over thirty years, in search of beaver, glory, adventure, and a watered transportation route to the Pacific, the great men of the trapping and exploration era²⁷ searched for a mythical Buenaventura River draining the country west of South Pass to the Pacific Ocean. The search was daunting, hindered by the extremely complicated drainage system west of South Pass. The Green, the Big Gray, the Salt, the Sweetwater, and the Bear rivers all head near South Pass. The Green flows into the Colorado, bound for the Gulf of California. The Big Gray and Salt feed the Snake, thence the Columbia, and finally the Pacific. The Sweetwater is part of the Platte-Missouri river system, and flows into the Gulf of

²⁴ Cline, *Peter Skene Ogden and the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 46; Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 18.

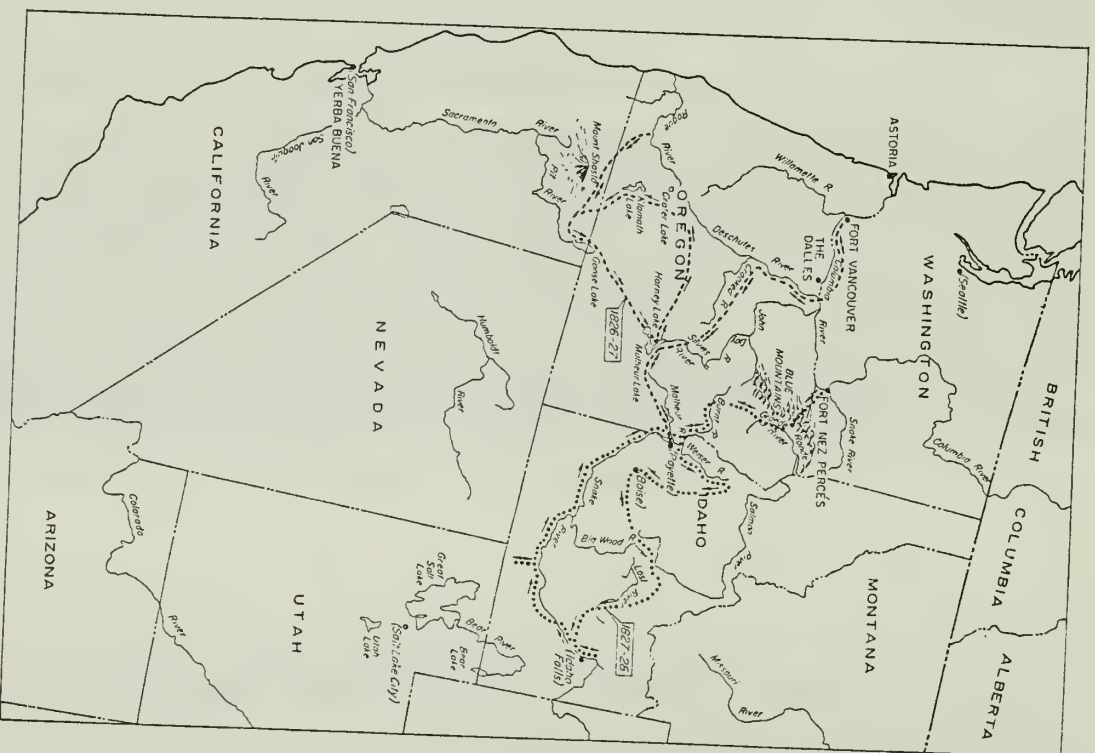
²⁵ Work, quoted in Cline, *Peter Skene Ogden*, p. 52; Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), p. 5; Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 19.

²⁶ Quoted in Cline, *Peter Skene Ogden and the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 46.

²⁷ Including Ogden, Smith, Ashley, Walker, Carson, Bridger, Fitzpatrick, Bonneville.



Snake Country Expeditions, 1824-25, 1825-26



Snake Country Expeditions, 1826-27, 1827-28

Figure 5. Hudson's Bay Company Snake Country Expeditions, 1824-1828 (Gloria Griffen Cline, *Peter Skene Ogden and the Hudson's Bay Company*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974, pp. 57, 84).

Mexico. The Bear River flows north northwest as far as Soda Springs, where it makes an abrupt turn south to the Great Salt Lake. The lake has no outlet.²⁸

Trappers and explorers focused their search for the Buenaventura on the alkaline plains west of the Great Salt Lake, south of the City of Rocks, and across which the first overland emigrants to California would pass. They would find this "a terrible country, a sandy waste men ventured upon at the peril of their lives... Even springs were scant, and likely to be bitter with salt. There were no beaver there — no riches."²⁹ And there was no Buenaventura:

There was no great river, there was no broad water highway to the Pacific. The drainage from the Rocky Mountains went south and north and east but not west, except for those streams like the Weber and the Bear, which ran ineffectually into the Dead Sea, and the Humboldt, which died with an alkaline whimper in the Humboldt Sink.³⁰

Ogden's Snake River Brigade of 1829 discovered the Humboldt River. Although they did not know it, and although the search for the Buenaventura would not be officially conceded until 1843, this was the "lost river": a small stream with brackish water of vile taste that sank "with an alkaline whimper." Future travelers — the hundreds of thousands of emigrants bound for California — would also curse the Humboldt, while relying absolutely on its alkaline water and sparse forage, the only water, the only grass, the only refuge, in an enormous expanse of desert.³¹

Ogden was similarly unimpressed by his 1825 discovery of Granite Pass. For Ogden, the discovery was relatively inconsequential; the Goose Creek drainage was not a significant source of beaver, and fur trappers, unlike later emigrants, were not restricted in their travels to routes wide enough for wagon passage and possessing sufficient feed and water for wagon stock.

In 1833, the American Fur Company's Captain Benjamin L. E. Bonneville retained Joseph Reddeford Walker to lead a band of trappers west from Salt Lake in search of new trapping grounds. Traveling west, Walker forged a trail across what became known as the Bonneville Flats. (Six years earlier, Jedediah Smith had almost died on this passage, as would the first overland migrants to California, eight years later.) Walker traveled north of this route on his return in 1834, descending Goose Creek to the Snake River. From this vantage point, he "rediscovered" Granite Pass. In 1842,

²⁸ Wallace Stegner, *Mormon Country* (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1942), pp. 242-245; Philip Fradkin, *Sagebrush Country* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1989), p. 84.

²⁹ Dale L. Morgan, *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1953), p. 24; Ray Allen Billington, *The Far Western Frontier, 1830-1860* (New York: Harper & Row, 1956), pp. 61-62.

³⁰ Stegner, *Mormon Country*, p. 246.

³¹ Cline, *Peter Skene Ogden and the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 87; Billington, *The Far Western Frontier, 1830-1860*, p. 61.

Joseph B. Chiles traveled east across the pass, and confirmed its potential as a possible, although difficult, route to the Humboldt. Granite Pass would provide the final link in an overland route between Illinois and the Sacramento Valley: the California Trail, as it ran through the City of Rocks.³²

Overland Migration

In 1840, Thomas Farnham and his small party traveled from Peoria, Illinois to the Oregon Territory, initiating a mass migration that would peak at over 100,000 in 1852 but that would not end until completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. Historian John D. Unruh, Jr. wrote that overland migration has been "one of the most fascinating topics for writers, folklorists, and historians of the American West. The overlanders'... legendary covered wagons have come to symbolize America's westward movement."³³ The emigrants themselves realized the enormous personal, social, cultural, and political consequences of their journey and left an astonishing array of diaries and letters describing their routes and life along those routes. Chimney Rock, Independence Rock, and the City of Rocks figure prominently in these accounts — they disrupted the monotony of the journey as surely as they broke the level surface of the plains. In varied degrees of eloquence and imagination, emigrants duly described them. The City of Rocks also occasioned comment as a place of heightened Indian menace; a place of final respite, prior to the dreaded crossing of the barren Humboldt plain; and as an important trail junction.

All migrations are a response to both "push" and "pull" factors. Depression hit the vast Mississippi Valley in 1837. Land and opportunity that only twenty years earlier had represented the American frontier were scarce. Wheat sold for ten cents a bushel, corn for nothing, "and bacon was so cheap that steamboats used it for fuel."³⁴ The push west then, for this "free, enlightened, [but] redundant people," was considerable.³⁵

*"Come along, come along — don't be alarmed, Uncle Sam is rich enough to give us all a farm." 1852 camp song, quoted in John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 17.*

The pull was also compelling: the opportunity to secure the Oregon Country as American territory and unlimited, fertile soil, not only in Oregon but also in Mexico's northern province of California.

³² Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), p. 5; Billington, *The Far Western Frontier, 1830-1860*, p. 62.

³³ John D. Unruh, Jr., *The Plains Across. The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-60*, (Urbana, Chicago, London: University of Illinois Press, 1979), p. 3.

³⁴ Billington, *The Far Western Frontier, 1830-1860*, p. 90.

³⁵ Hall J. Kelley, General Agent for the O. C. Society, *American Society for Encouraging the Settlement of the Oregon Territory*, ca. 1831, Entry #135, Roll 9, "Western Americana 1550-1900: Frontier History of the Trans-Mississippi West," University of Montana Special Collections, Missoula, Montana.

The pull had begun decades earlier, in print if not in fact. In 1813, the St. Louis *Missouri Gazette* reported "no obstruction ... that any person would dare to call a mountain" between St. Louis and the Columbia River [and] in all probability [no Indians] to interrupt ... progress."³⁶ In 1830, trapper William L. Sublette successfully breached the Continental Divide at South Pass (Wyoming) with wagons. He subsequently reported to the Secretary of War that "the ease and safety with which it was done prove the facility of communicating over land with the Pacific ocean."³⁷

One year later, Boston's American Society for Encouraging the Settlement of the Oregon Territory published a *General Circular to all Persons of Good Character Who Wish to Emigrate to the OREGON TERRITORY*. The circular promised an account of "the character and advantages of the country; the right and the means of operations by which it is to be settled and ALL NECESSARY DIRECTIONS FOR BECOMING AN EMIGRANT."³⁸

Others urged caution, arguing that while the mountains might be passable (with great difficulty), the "Great American Desert" was not. W. J. Snelling predicted mass starvation in the arid plains, loss of stock to Indian theft, and Indian attack "in retaliation for the pillaging of white hunters." He concluded that the trip could not be made in one season, forcing emigrants to winter in the Rocky Mountains, where they could first eat their horses and then their shoes, before "starving with the wolves." Potential emigrants debated the wisdom of the journey in this carnival of "ignorance, unreality and confusion."³⁹

Emigrants commonly employed a 2,000- to 2,500-pound farm wagon with a flat bed.... A wagon of this size loaded with some 2,500 pounds required a team of six mules or more commonly four yoke of oxen.... The provisions for the entire trip and all the baggage would have to conform to the weight limitations of the team.... A family of four could make the trip in a single wagon... but because of their size, the majority of families were compelled to take more than one wagon. [Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, pp. 20-22.]

In compelling proof of the journey's possibility, Presbyterian missionaries Samuel Parker, Marcus Whitman, and Henry Spaulding, in the company of women and children, traveled overland to Oregon Territory in 1834. Methodist Missionary Jason Lee followed in 1839, with 51 settlers. These men and women went west as evangelists, not to prosper but to save the souls of the native inhabitants. Yet, western historian Ray Allen Billington writes that "their contribution to history was significant, not as apostles of Christianity, but as promoters of migration. More than any other group they kept alive the spark of interest in Oregon and hurried the westward surge of population into the

³⁶ Quoted in Unruh, *The Plains Across*, p. 28.

³⁷ Sublett quoted in Unruh, *The Plains Across*, p. 29.

³⁸ Kelley, General Agent for the O. C. Society, *American Society for Encouraging the Settlement of the Oregon Territory*.

³⁹ Unruh, *The Plains Across*, pp. 29-30.

Willamette Valley." Reports sent from the Whitman mission to eastern religious journals were replete with details of the prospering farms, of abundant resources, and of virgin land. Perhaps as significantly, the Whitman's presence promised shelter and companionship at the end of a long and unfamiliar trail.⁴⁰

California boosters also described a gentle and healthy climate, potential agricultural wealth, an enormous variety of resources, and abundant game.⁴¹ In 1840, Richard H. Dana published *Two Years Before the Mast*, "probably the most influential single bit of California propaganda." Dana boasted "In the hands of an enterprising people, what a country this might be!" And an enterprising people responded.⁴²

The first party to travel overland to California hailed from Platte County, western Missouri. The 69 men, women, and children were encouraged by returned trapper Antoine Robidoux who described a "perfect paradise, a perennial spring."⁴³ They were led by John Bidwell and John Bartleson and further assisted by trapper Thomas Fitzpatrick and Jesuit priest Father De Smet. (Bidwell recalled years later that "our ignorance of the route was complete. We knew that California lay west, and that was the extent of our knowledge.")⁴⁴ Like the parties to follow, they raced the seasons, scouting the Platte River plain for the first sign of sufficient spring grass to sustain their herds, and sprinting across country at an average pace of 15 miles per day in a desperate race to beat the snow to the Sierra Nevada (Figure 6).

The Bidwell-Bartleson party followed the Oregon Trail as far as Soda Springs (near present day Pocatello, Idaho). Here, half the party opted for Oregon. The remainder abandoned their wagons and proceeded southwest across the tortuous, alkali "Bonneville Flats" north of the Great Salt Lake, along the trail blazed — and dismissed — by Jedediah Smith in 1827 and Joseph Walker in 1833.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Billington, *The Far Western Frontier, 1830-1860*, pp. 83-85.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 562-565.

⁴² Quoted in Billington, *The Far Western Frontier, 1830-1860*, p. 563.

⁴³ John Bidwell, "A Journey To California [first published ca. 1842]," *First Three Wagon Trains*, (Portland, Oregon: Binfords & Mort, n.d.), p. 7.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 9.

⁴⁵ Billington, *The Far Western Frontier, 1830-1860*, p. 565.

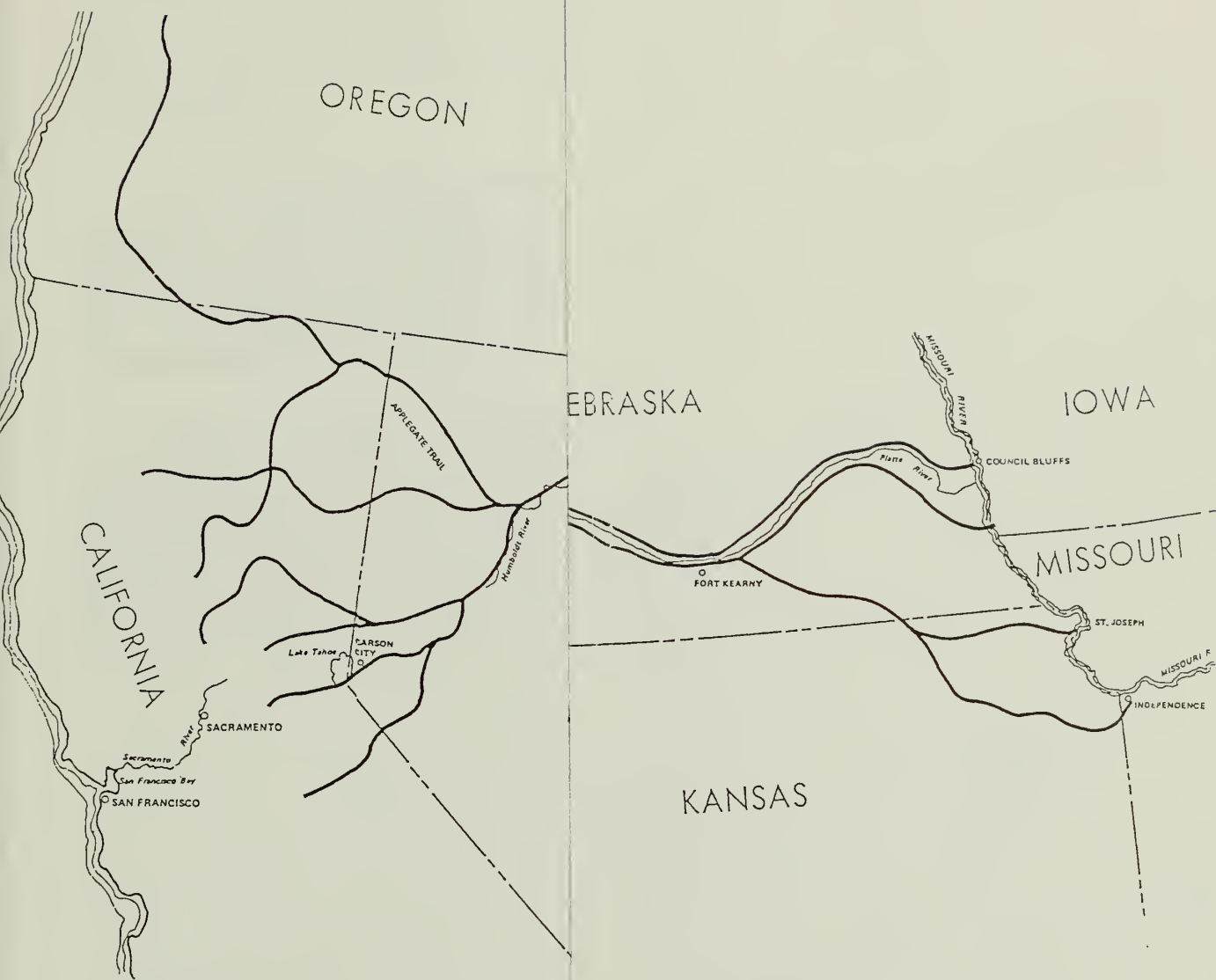


Figure 6. The California Trail, Missouri to the Sacramento Valley, USDI National Park Service, *Eligibility/Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment for National Historic Trail Authorization*, Washington D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1987.

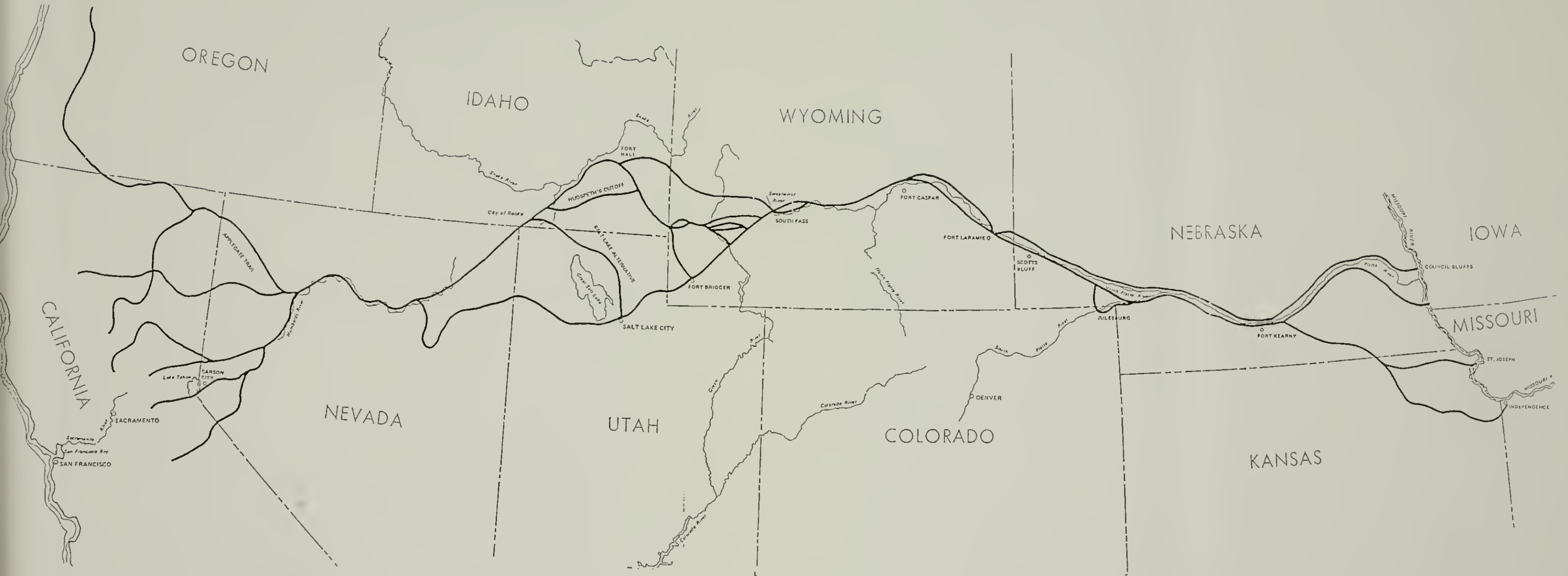


Figure 6. The California Trail, Missouri to the Sacramento Valley, USDI National Park Service, *Eligibility/Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment for National Historic Trail Authorization*, Washington D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1987.

Other parties followed by alternative routes: via Santa Fe, via Oregon, and, in 1843, via City of Rocks/Granite Pass, by way of the Oregon Trail to Fort Hall. This later party traveled under the leadership of Walker and of Joseph B. Chiles, a member of the Bidwell-Bartleson party of 1841. At the confluence of the Raft and Snake rivers, Chiles and "a few companions" proceeded west along the Snake, to the Malheur River, and thence south to California. Walker and the remainder of the party proceeded up the Raft River, to the City of Rocks, west to the Goose Creek range, to a (barely) tolerable wagon crossing at Granite Pass — a route destined to become the main overland road to California.

This route met the basic requirements of an overland trail: it possessed a minimum of geographic obstacles (although wagons had to be lowered by rope down Granite Pass and other defiles); water was available at reasonably regular intervals, as was sufficient browse for emigrant stock; and, with the exception of the unfortunate and much-lamented loop to the north between South Pass and the Raft River confluence, the trail formed a direct line between the Mississippi Valley and the promised land.⁴⁶

Subsequent alternatives — the Applegate Trail, the Salt Lake Alternate, Hudspeth's Cutoff — varied the route between South Pass and the Upper Humboldt, but all funneled to City of Rocks and Granite Pass. These alternates promised varied advantages: some were billed as shorter, offering emigrants the advantage of time (winter and the Sierras approached); some offered access to provisions (the barren Forty-Mile Desert, within which both man and beast had starved, approached). The advantages realized did not always comport with those promised: shorter did not always mean faster and provisions were not always available.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Morgan, *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West*, pp. 83-85, 91-92; Daniel J. Hutchison and Larry R. Jones, editors, *Emigrant Trails of Southern Idaho* (Boise: Bureau of Land Management and Idaho State Historical Society, 1993), p. 3; Merle Wells, "City of Rocks and Granite Pass," *Utah Geological Association*, (Publication 13, 1984).

⁴⁷ Billington, *The Far Western Frontier, 1830-1860*, p. 565.; John Phillip Reid, *Law for the Elephant*, (San Marino, California: Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 1980), pp. 241, 244; Thomas Christy, 7/1/1850, quoted in Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II, p. 6.

Bound for California

Monday, April 9th, 1848. I am the first one up; breakfast is over; our wagon is backed up to the steps; we will load at the hind end and shove the things in front. The first thing is a big box that will just fit in the wagon bed. That will have the bacon, salt, and various other things; then it will be covered with a cover made of light boards nailed on two pieces of inch plank about three inches wide. This will serve as for a table, there is a hole in each corner and we have sticks sharpened at one end so they will stick in the ground and we will have a nice table; then when it is on the box George will sit on it and let his feet hang over and drive the team. It is as high as the wagon bed. Now we will put in the old chest that is packed with our clothes and things we will want to wear and use on the way. The till is the medicine chest; then there will be cleats fastened to the bottom of the wagon bed to keep things from slipping out of place. Now there is a vacant place clear across that will be large enough to set a chair; will set it with the back against the side of the wagon bed; there I will ride. On the other side will be a vacancy where little Jessie can play. He has a few toys and some marbles and some sticks for whip stocks, some blocks for oxen and I tie a string on the stick and he uses my work basket for a covered wagon and plays going to Oregon. He never seems to get cross or tired. The next thing is a box as high as the chest that is packed with a few dishes and things we won't need til we get thru. And now we will put in the long sacks of flour and other things... Now comes the groceries. We will made a wall of smaller sacks stood on end; dried apples and peaches, beans, rice, sugar and coffee, the latter being in the green state. We will brown it in a skillet as we want to use it. Everything must be put in strong bags; no paper wrappings for this trip. There is a corner left for the wash-tub and the lunch basket will just fit in the tub. The dishes we want to use will all be in the basket. I am going to start with good earthen dishes and if they get broken have tin ones to take their place. Have made 4 nice little table cloths so am going to live just like I was at home. Now we will fill the other corner with pick-ups. The iron-ware that I will want to use every day will go in a box on the hind end of the wagon like a feed box. Now we are all loaded but the bed. I wanted to put it in and sleep out but George said I wouldn't rest any so I will level up the sacks with some extra bedding, then there is a side of sole leather that will go on first, then two comforts and we will have a good enough bed for anyone to sleep on. At night I will turn my chair down to make the bed a little longer so now all we have to do in the morning is put in the bed and make some coffee and roll out.

The wagon looks so nice, the nice white cover drawn down tight to the side boards with a good ridge to keep from sagging. It is high enough for me to stand straight under the roof with a curtain to pull down in front and one at the back end. Now its all done and I get in out of the tummult...

[Keturah Belknap, quoted in Daniel J. Hutchison, Bureau of Land Management, and Larry R. Jones, Idaho State Historical Society, eds., *Emigrant Trails of Southern Idaho*, (Boise, Idaho: Idaho State Historical Society), 1994, p. 3.]

■ *Junction of Trails*

Fort Hall, established in 1833 by Nathaniel Wyeth of the Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company and operated by the Hudson's Bay Company since 1837, was a critical point of decision for the early travelers along the overland trail. The fort was located on the south bank of the Snake River, three and one-half months travel and 1200 miles from Missouri and almost three months and 600 miles from the Sacramento Valley. The fort was the third and last trading station on the overland trail and here travelers made final preparations for the most difficult stage of their journey and final decisions on their ultimate destination.

Beginning in 1843, former mountain man Caleb Greenwood, hired by California trader, cattleman, and pioneer John Sutter to lure and guide the Oregon bound to California (and willingly granted a pulpit at the British-operated fort), proselytized to the exhausted and confused on California's greater virtues and easier access.⁴⁸ Bud Guthrie immortalized Greenwood in the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Way West*:

[From Fort Hall to Boise] there's the Snake to ford twice.... The Snake ain't no piss-piddle of a river even if you might think so, seein' it from here, but you'll get over, most o' you, and maybe some wagons.... Damn me fer a liar if fer days you don't roll along her rim and no drink for man or brute, and there she flows, so goddam far and steep below...

Californy way is too by-jusus tame. Nothin' the whole length of her to test a man. Nothin' to remember 'cept easy goin'.... [They raise] nothin' cept what's sot in the ground and whatever chews on grass. She's a soft country, she is, and so goddam sunny a man wonders ain't there ever no weather there. It ain't like Oregon thataway.⁴⁹

After the 1849 discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill, Greenwood's services were no longer required. Gold proved a powerful incentive against which the promised virtues of Oregon paled.

Two days past Fort Hall, the trail split, right to Oregon, left to California. Jacob Hayden, traveling in 1852, described the decision thusly:

We arose this morning with a full determination of going to Oregon, but when we reached the junction of the road, the team stopped. Part of us, after everything was taken into consideration, concluded to try our fortunes in California; the remainder gave in and we concluded to let the

⁴⁸ John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), pp. 9-10; Hiram Martin Chittenden, *History of the American Fur Trade of the Far West* (Stanford: Academic Press, 1954), p.479.

⁴⁹ A.B. Guthrie, Jr., *The Way West* (New York and Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1949), p. 253.

oxen decide our destiny. We started them and awaited the issue with great anxiety: they turned to the left, leaving the Oregon road to the right.⁵⁰

Those firm in their commitment to Oregon also faced a decision at the crossing of the Raft River: to proceed on the main trail along the Snake River or along alternate routes that took them south through the City of Rocks. The direct route was damned both with insufficient water for man and stock and too much water at the deadly fords. Oregon's Blue Mountains also presented a formidable front, as did the toll road around Mount Hood. For those who could not or chose not to pay the toll, the road ended at The Dalles on the Columbia, at which point emigrants proceeded downriver, in a dangerous conclusion to their journey. In 1846, the Applegate brothers scouted an alternative to this main Oregon road. Those choosing the Applegate Trail followed the California Trail through the City of Rocks, across Granite Pass, to a point near Winnemucca, Nevada, "thence northwest over Black Rock desert and the Cascade Range into the Rogue River Valley, and thence north to Salem, Oregon."⁵¹ As with all of the alternatives, there were tradeoffs: travelers avoided crossing the Snake and the Columbia Dalles, yet faced "appalling difficulties" in Nevada's High Rock Canyon.⁵²

Saw some men this evening that came by the way of Salt Lake. They report that ther [sic] will be a great many emmigrants detained thee [sic] till after harvest, being no provisons [sic] to be had ... They also say that it is 100 miles farther to come the Lake route. [Thomas Christy, 7/1/1850, quoted in Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II, p. 6.]

After the 1862 Boise Basin gold strike, wagons traveling north from Salt Lake City forged a road from the Salt Lake Alternate to "Junction Valley," where they broke north off the California Trail, following the bench above Birch Creek past the present town of Oakley, and rejoining the Oregon Trail near Rock Creek.⁵³

⁵⁰ Jacob S. Hayden, 1852, quoted in Howard Ross Cramer, "Hudspeth's Cutoff southeastern Idaho, a map and composite diary," 1969, p. 21, prepared for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Burley, Idaho, File: "Contacts and other Historical Data," Records of Minidoka National Forest (1938-), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho.

⁵¹ Wm. H. Thompson, "Cassia County, Idaho, 1849-1949," 7/27/1949, File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (1938-), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho, p. 3.

⁵² Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), p. 8.

⁵³ Leslie L. Sudweeks, "The Raft River in Idaho History," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (June 1941), p. 289; Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology, *Bulletin #6: Geology and Water Resources of the Goose Creek Basin, Cassia County, Idaho*, (Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho, 1923), p. 18; Charles Twitchell to Ann Hubber, Historical Research Associates, May 12, 1995; Idaho Historical Society, "The Oregon Trail in Idaho," Reference Series Number 50, Idaho Historical Society, Boise, Idaho; Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 38.

■ *The Salt Lake Alternate, South Pass to City of Rocks*

Mountain man and entrepreneur Jim Bridger established the Fort Bridger trading post south of South Pass in 1843. Those who traveled to the fort had the option of cutting north to Fort Hall on the main road — a circuitous and unappealing alternative that added miles to an already-too-long journey — or, by 1846, of following Lansford Hastings' trail across the Bonneville Flats to the main road along the Humboldt. This latter, untenable route fell into disuse following the experience of the Donner party.⁵⁴

By 1848, one year after the Mormon exodus from Nauvoo to the Salt Lake Basin, California emigrants in need of rest and provisions had again diverted in large numbers south from South Pass to the Mormon "half-way house" of Salt Lake City (luxuries

[At the crossing of the Raft River], the Oregon and California roads separate, and we are glad to learn that only about 60 or 70 wagons, out of 750, except the Mormons, are taking the road to California. The Mormons stop at the great Salt Lake. ...

included a shave, new eyeglasses, a bed, a good meal). From Salt Lake City, they left behind "civilization, pretty girls, and pleasant memories," and proceeded north along the Salt Lake Alternate. This route was established in 1848 by Samuel Hensley, a member of the 1841 Bartleson-Bidwell party, and first traveled by H. W. Bigler's Mormon battalion, returning to Salt Lake City following the Mexican-American War. The route crossed the Bear River approximately one week (80 miles) north of Salt Lake City, cut west northwest across the southeast corner of what is now Idaho, and met the main California Trail at the south "gate" to City of Rocks. The granite monolith christened "Twin Sisters" by a member of the battalion marks this southern entrance.⁵⁵

Mormon emigrants, years behind the 1847 hegira, also followed this alternate, leaving the main California Trail at City of Rocks, and traveling east against the grain to the Salt Lake Basin — the land "that no one else wanted."⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 31. Jacob and George Donner's wagon train rediscovered what Jedediah Smith, Joseph Walker, and the members of the Bartleson-Bidwell party already knew: the Bonneville Flats were inhospitable to man and beast. Their wagons abandoned, their stock dead, their supplies exhausted, the Donner Party arrived in the Sierra Nevada after the first heavy snows of winter. In the ensuing winter, spent in hastily constructed log cabins, many starved. Those who did not, resorted to cannibalism.

⁵⁵ L. A. Fleming and A. R. Standing, "The Road to 'Fortune': The Salt Lake Cutoff," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (1938-), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho, pp. 250-251; James Hutchings (1849) quoted in Unruh, *The Plains Across*, p. 311.

⁵⁶ Chester Ingersoll, *Overland to California in 1847. Letters Written En Route to California, West from Independence, Missouri, to the Editor of the Joliet Signal*, (Fairfield, Washington: Ye Galleon Press, 1970), p. 35; S. George Ellsworth, "The Mormon Trail," *Pioneer Trails West*, Don Worcester, ed., (Caldwell Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1985), p. 167.

In 1849, Benoni M. Hudspeth and John J. Myers blazed a route along an "old Indian trail" running from the big bend of the Bear River (near Soda Springs) to Cassia Creek in the Raft River Valley, thus avoiding the long detour north to Fort Hall and then back along the Raft River toward the City of Rocks. When Hudspeth, Myers, and the large

party of Missouri miners that had employed them as guides emerged from the rugged mountains along the east bank of the Raft River (near present-day Malta), they were reportedly "'thunder struck' to find they had not reached the Humboldt at all."⁵⁷

[Along Hudspeth's Cutoff] the whole earth shows the effects of earthquakes. The rocks are thrown out of the earth in all confused forms imaginable, filling the earth with caverns and holes, rendering it dangerous to travel for either man or beast. The rolling of our wagons over the road produces a roar that sounded as though the earth was not two feet deep. [Pigman, 1858, quoted in Cramer, "Hudspeth's Cutoff southeastern Idaho, a map and composite diary," p. 21.]

[At the head of the Raft River] "such beards & faces! — all white with dust — our animals ditto. A wash was quite refreshing. Here we had dense willows to shelter us from the cold mountain blast." [Eleanor Allen, quoted in Hutchison and Jones, eds., *Emigrant Trails of Southern Idaho*, p. 97.]

Although the route was exceptionally rugged and passable only to west-bound wagons, it saved 22 miles and a day's travel over the road to Fort Hall. To footworn men and women in a hurry, this savings was considerable.

By October of 1849, General P.F. Smith recommended against establishing a permanent United States military post at Fort Hall, noting that much of the emigrant traffic traveled Hudspeth's Cutoff instead (Figure 7).⁵⁸

The City of Rocks

Between 1841 and 1860, the various overland roads funneled as many as 200,000 men, women, and children through the City of Rocks.⁵⁹ Historian John Unruh argues persuasively against "the language of typicality" in describing their journey:

it seems axiomatic to distinguish between abnormally wet and abnormally dry years.... The inexorable growth of supportive facilities...further negates the usefulness of a 'typical year' approach.... Similarly revolutionizing the nature of the overland journey were the diverse traveler-oriented activities of the federal government: exploration, survey, road construction, postal services, the establishment of forts, the dispatching of punitive military expeditions, the allocation of protective escorts for emigrant caravans, the negotiation of Indian treaties designed to insure the safety of emigrant travel.... The California gold rush accelerated the amount of eastbound trail traffic.... Trail improvements contributed to significant reductions in the amount of time required to travel the overland route.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Idaho Historical Society, "Hudspeth's Cutoff," Idaho Reference Series Number 290, IHS, Boise.

⁵⁸ Sudweeks, "The Raft River in Idaho History," p. 293; Idaho Historical Society, "Hudspeth's Cutoff," Idaho Reference Series Number 290, IHS, Boise.

⁵⁹ Unruh, *The Plains Across*, p. 120.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 379-381.

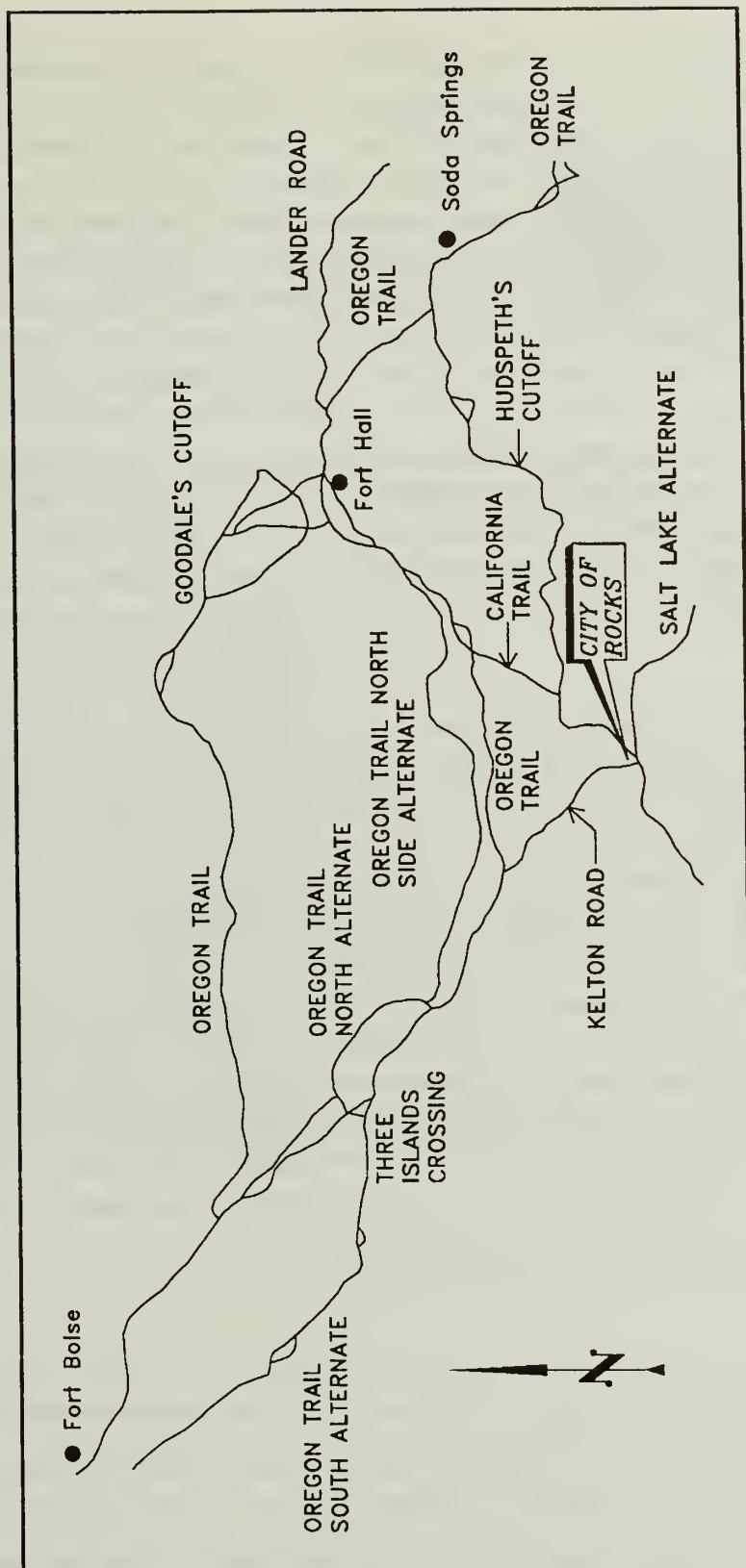


Figure 7. Emigrant Trails of Southern Idaho (including Alternative Routes along the California Trail). Daniel J. Hutchison, Bureau of Land Management, and Larry R. Jones, Idaho State Historical Society, eds., *Emigrant Trails of Southern Idaho*, 1994, inside front cover.

Between 1841 and 1848, the journey from Missouri to California consumed an average of 157 days; add the years 1849-1860, and the average drops by over a month, to 121 day. After the great Mormon migration of 1847, those whose provisions, wagons, stock, or resolve had failed had

One day west of the City of Rocks: Never saw such dust! In some places it was actually to the top of the forewheels! Fine white dust, more like flour. Our men were a perfect fright, being literally covered with it....

the option of detouring to Salt Lake City. Prior to 1849, emigrants were primarily families of farmers, hopeful of settling — of staying — in California and Oregon. After the 1849 discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill, the wagon trains were joined by single men, unencumbered with

heavy loads and hopeful of leaving California once they had struck it rich in the placer deposits of the Sacramento Valley; by 1850, both those who were successful and those who failed added a stream of east-bound traffic to the migration.⁶¹ By 1852, the gold fever had waned and "families seeking new homes" once again replaced the fortune hunters. For those traveling between 1851 and 1862, when the threat of death from hostile Indians kept pace with the threat from cholera or accident, the journey west of South Pass was significantly more dangerous than for those who had preceded and those who would follow.⁶²

Yet there were the constants of daily life — irrespective of the year, men and beasts needed food, water, and protection. Seven thousand five hundred mules, 31,000 oxen, 23,999 horses, and 5,000 cows accompanied the 9,000 California-bound wagons counted in Fort Laramie in 1852 — the peak year of emigrant traffic. Cut the numbers in half, for more "typical" years, and they remain impressive. These animals needed water when they "nooned" and again at the end of the day. The drain on the semi-arid West's water and browse resources was significant, necessitating that camp sites be varied and numerous and that the trail be spread over a many-mile radius, except in those areas where passage was limited to a narrow defile.⁶³

Approaching City of Rocks

Early breakfast, & soon on the trail again, - which winds up this deep valley, from S. by E. round to N.W. -An entire range on our left, of volcanic hills, for about 15 miles; and on our right, similar formations for about 10 ms. when we entered a very extraordinary valley, called "City of Castles." [J. Goldsborough Bruff (August 29, 1849), quoted in Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II.]

The circle is about 5 miles across one way & 3 the other, with only a narrow passage into it from the East 20 yds wide & another from the West 10 yds. Wide; the road passed through it. [John E. Dalton, July 26, 1852, quoted in Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 49.]

⁶¹ Despite this significant change in demographics, the absolute number of families on the trail remained relatively constant through the gold-rush years.

⁶² Unruh, *The Plains Across*, p. 403; Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, p. 35; Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), p. 11.

⁶³ William J. Little, Range Consultant, "A Historical Overview of Livestock Use in the Area of City of Rocks National Reserve From Introduction to 1907," 1994, p. 8, copy of report provided by the National Park Service, Pacific Northwest System Support Office, Seattle, Washington.

At the northeast entrance to the City of Rocks, the trail constricted over Echo Gap (also called Echo Pass), and led to the Circle Creek basin. It constricted again at Pinnacle "Pass" east of Twin Sisters, and again at the head of Emigrant Canyon south of Twin Sisters, where the Salt Lake Alternate joined the main trail. Camp sites were available near "Register Rock" and "Camp Rock" where a number of springs provided water, along Circle Creek, and at the Emigrant Canyon spring. However, grazing resources at these sites would have been quickly exhausted in the late summer months when most emigrants arrived, suggesting that the Raft River Valley (east of City of Rocks), Big Cove (2 miles east of the City of Rocks, near Almo), and Junction Valley (2 miles southwest of the City of Rocks) would have been most often used as camping sites, particularly in the years of heaviest traffic and least rain.⁶⁴

These camps provided not only an afternoon's or a night's rest, but also served as final havens of water and grass as migrants approached the long trek along the Humboldt River and the "Forty Mile Desert" past the Humboldt Sink. This was "the dreaded part of California travel, made more tragic by the weakened condition of so many emigrants and the death of so much of their livestock."⁶⁵ To avoid similar fates, trains would sacrifice precious days in the Raft River and Goose Creek regions to allow their stock to rest and feed.

Perhaps taking advantage of the brief interruption, and certainly in response to the approaching Granite Pass descent and Humboldt Desert travail, emigrants lightened their loads, jettisoning all but the essentials of continued travel: "at a fine spring and good grass we took dinner. Here the old Fort Hall road and the Salt Lake City road come together. ... Here we overtook a company who were abandoning their wagons, and like us, packing."⁶⁶ As late as the 1970s, scattered remains of the wagons and abandoned personal effects remained within the City of Rocks. That they were only scattered attests not only to the passage of time, but to the extent to which subsequent emigrants salvaged and reused what others had left behind, especially the axles and wagon tongues used to make wagon repairs. And, as the Mormons struggled to forge a city in the wilderness, their salvage parties ranged in a wide arc north and east of Salt Lake: "especially welcome" were the tons of iron from abandoned wagons they brought back into the valley.⁶⁷

After the establishment of Salt Lake City, life along the trail was not limited to those in transit. In 1849, J. Goldsborough Bruff encountered "2 Mormon young men....trading for broken-down cattle... They of course were from Salt Lake Valley." By the 1850s, Mormon entrepreneurs

⁶⁴ Wallace Taylor, quoted in Little, "A Historical Overview of Livestock Use in the Area of City of Rocks National Reserve From Introduction to 1907," pp. 5, 8-9.

⁶⁵ John Phillip Reid, *Law for the Elephant*, (San Marino, California: Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 1980), p. 244.

⁶⁶ James Mason Hutchings, 9/14/1849, quoted in Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II, p. 5.

⁶⁷ Merle W. Wells, Idaho State Historic Preservation Officer, "City of Rocks National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form," 1972, p. 7.1; Unruh, *The Plains Across*, pp. 152-153, 305.

had established seasonal blacksmith shops in the Raft River Valley. Others traveled north from Salt Lake at regular intervals, to sell cheese, butter, eggs, and other perishables to the emigrants.⁶⁸

■ ***The Lander Road, Fort Kearny to Honey Lake***

The first emigrants loudly protested their vulnerability to Indians and to the disingenuous misinformation of opportunistic trail guides. They lamented the rough and unimproved nature of the road and the lack of mail and supply posts, of hospitals, and of blacksmith shops. In 1857, Congress funded survey and construction of the Fort Kearny, South Pass, and Honey Lake Wagon Road, along which the City of Rocks served as one of three primary diversion points (see Figure 7). Between 1858 and 1860, federal crews, under the supervision of William M.F. Magraw (east of South Pass) and of Frederick Lander (west of South Pass) felled trees, constructed bridges, and developed reservoirs along a crude but graded highway known to emigrants as the "Lander Road." From Soda Springs to Fort Hall, this route ran north of the old emigrant road along a more direct route, through country reportedly blessed with ample water, grass, and timber. West of Fort Hall, minor improvements provided slightly better access to the City of Rocks. Beyond the city, road improvements ultimately included an improved western descent over Granite Pass and construction of reservoirs at Rabbit Hole and Antelope Springs northwest of the Humboldt River, lessening the danger of Humboldt Desert passage.⁶⁹ Completed in time for the 1859 travel season, Lander's Road served as many as 13,000 wagons in its inaugural year.

Construction of the Simpson Road from Salt Lake City due west to the Carson Valley (roughly paralleling the abandoned Hasting's Cutoff [see Figure 6]) also impacted emigrant travel through the City of Rocks. The road, surveyed in 1859 by Captain James H. Simpson of the U.S. Army's Topographic Engineers, saved approximately 288 miles over the northern City of Rocks route — or approximately two weeks of emigrant travel. By 1860, the road had diverted winter postal and express carriers from the City of Rocks route (an inevitable change as Granite Pass had already proved impassable in winter) and served as the primary Pony Express route to California. In a promotional battle over the two roads — a battle reminiscent of the promises made by an earlier generation of trail guides and traders — high-ranking government officials preached the virtues of the Simpson route. By 1860 the traffic from Salt Lake had increased to the point that troops were deployed to protect the emigrant trains. Simpson himself admitted, however, to the "possibility" that those "desiring to travel through to California without passing through Great Salt Lake City ... for purposes of replenishing supplies, ... would be best to take the Lander cut-off at the South Pass and

⁶⁸ Sandra L. Myres, *Ho for California! Women's Overland Diaries from the Huntington Library* (San Marino: Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 1980), p. 159; Sudweeks, "The Raft River in Idaho History," p. 295; J. Goldsborough Bruff (August 29, 1849), quoted in Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II.

⁶⁹ W. Turrentine Jackson, *Wagon Roads West, A Study of Federal Road Surveys and Construction in the Trans-Mississippi West, 1846-1869*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), p. 196; Unruh, *The Plains Across*, p. 237.

keep the old road along the Humboldt River."⁷⁰ Thousands of emigrants agreed, bypassing Fort Bridger and Salt Lake City and keeping to the Lander Road. Briefly, however, from 1860 until 1862, construction of the Simpson Road did halt most California-bound traffic on the Salt Lake Alternate to the City of Rocks. This traffic resumed in 1862, when gold was discovered in the Boise Basin.⁷¹

By 1860, emigrants faced a remarkably different journey than that undertaken by their predecessors: they traveled along surveyed and graded roads, crossed the most deadly rivers by bridge or ford, and watered their stock at constructed reservoirs. Blacksmith shops and trading posts had been established and mail could be sent and received enroute.⁷²

■ *Emigrants' Response to the City of Rocks*

*We are creatures shaped by our experiences; we like what we know, more often than we know what we like. ... Sagebrush is an acquired taste, as are raw earth and alkali flats. The erosional forms of the dry country strike the attention without ringing the bells of appreciation. It is almost pathetic to read the journals of people who came west up the Platte Valley in the 1840s and 1850s and tried to find words for Chimney Rock and Scott's Bluff, and found and clung for dear life to the cliches of castles and silent sentinels.*⁷³

While descriptions of a typical trail experience, transcending the vagaries of route and year of travel, are a dangerous historical exercise the same is not necessarily true of generalizations about migrants' psychological response to their journey. Historian John Mack Faragher, in his comprehensive study *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, argues that emigrant diaries reveal a striking similarity in their pattern of organization and in their emphasis. "Things they had done that day" form the third most common notation; reports on families' health, comfort, and safety, the second.

⁷⁰ Unruh, *The Plains Across*, p. 239; Jackson, *Wagon Roads West*, p. 214.

⁷¹ Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 62.

⁷² Unruh, *The Plains Across*, p. 242.

⁷³ Wallace Stegner, "Thoughts In A Dry Land," *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs: Living and Writing in the West* (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), p. 53.

The most common notations, however, were of things they had seen that day: "the emigrants were startled and in some cases overawed by the imposing natural landscape and strange climate through which they passed. In terms of sheer preponderance, men and women emigrants mentioned the beauty of the setting more than any other single subject."⁷⁴

Those who traveled through the City of Rocks described the city in poetic and awe-struck detail.⁷⁵ And, as Wallace Stegner would later note, their descriptions of the "weird" configuration are striking in their consistent retreat to castles and silent sentinels. Rather than pathetic, this retreat may be a simple reality of language: they used the words they knew to describe what they had never seen. Yet their clichéd adjectives do not disguise the wonderment with which they viewed the city or their extreme gratitude for the geographic diversion in a monotonous journey (Appendix A).⁷⁶

Despite months on the trail, many had not yet adjusted to the size or immutability of the western landscape: upon approaching the vast Pyramid Circle, Helen Carpenter described a land base of "about an acre"; Lucena Parsons predicted "a few more years & then [the City rocks] will be leveled to the ground."

Carpenter wrote:

Emerging from [Echo Pass] we came into what is known as Pyramid Circle. There was perhaps an acre of partially level land with a good sized stream flowing through it. On this level, and the hills which encircled it, were the most beautiful and wonderful white rocks that we ever saw. This is known as the City rocks and certainly bears a striking resemblance to a city. To be sure it was a good deal out of the usual, for the large and small houses were curiously intermingled

The City of Rocks

[It] is a city not built by hands, neither is it constructed out of wood or brick, but is made of a material more enduring than either.... It is, in fact, a city of rocks The space between the rocks is sufficiently wide to admit a horse and rider, so that one can ride in between and around them. They remind one of a grave yard, so solemn the place appears, and as one rambles among these rocks it seems to him almost as if he were trespassing upon sacred ground. [Charles Nelson Teeter (September 1865), quoted in Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 40.]

...

During the forenoon we passed through a stone village composed of huge, isolated rocks of various and singular shapes, some resembling cottages, others steeples and domes. It is called "City of Rocks," but I think the name Pyramid City" more suitable. It is a sublime, strange, and wonderful scene — one of nature's most interesting works.... Eight miles from Pyramid City we recrossed, going southwest, the forty-second parallel of latitude, which we had crossed going north, on the eighth day of June, near Fort Laramie. [Margaret A. Frink (July 17, 1850), quoted in Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 45.]

...

Camped at Steeple or Castle Rocks here is a sublime scenery to the Romantic the rocks resemble an old City of Ruins there are thousands of names here I registered Mine on a large Rock which we named the Cast[le] Rock hotel. [Richard August Keen, June 22, 1852, quoted in Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 48.]

⁷⁴ Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, p. 14.

⁷⁵ Historian Merle Wells reports that James F. Wilkins christened the area "City of Rocks" on August 12, 1849. While the name soon "gained general acceptance," numerous emigrants also called the city Castle Rocks, Pyramid Circle, or Steeple Rocks (Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II).

⁷⁶ Stegner, "Thoughts In A Dry Land," p. 53.

and set at all angles. There was everything one could imagine from a dog house to a church and courthouse.⁷⁷

Vincent Geiger echoed:

You can imagine among these massive piles, church domes, spires, pyramids, &c., & in fact, with a little fancying you can see [anything] from the Capitol at Washington to a lovely thatched cottage.⁷⁸

At City of Rocks, emigrants generally described what they saw, rather than what they did. Yet the logistics of the City of Rocks camping experience are easily recreated. As it had for the previous 100 days, camp had to be made and broken; the stock cared for (although the relative abundance of grass would have spared men the task of driving the herds miles from the trail); men, women, and children fed; in Indian country, in bad years, a careful watch mounted. Carpenter describes the ritual of travel, nooning, and camping:

the plain fact of it is *we have no time for sociability*. From the time we get up in the morning, until we are on the road, it is hurry scurry to get breakfast and put away the things that necessarily had to be pulled out last night—while under way there is no room in the wagon for a visitor, nooning is barely enough to eat a cold bite—and at night all the cooking utensils and provisions are to be gotten about the camp fire and cooking enough done to last until the next night.

Although there is not much to cook, the difficulty and inconvenience of doing it, amounts to a great deal—so that by the time one has squatted around the fire and cooked bread and bacon, and made several dozen trips to and from the wagon—washed the dishes ... and gotten things ready for an early breakfast, some of the others already have their night caps on—at any rate it's time to go to bed.

In respect to women's work the days are all very much the same.... Some women have very little help about the camp, being obliged to get the wood and water (as far as possible), make camp fires, unpack at night and pack up in the mornings.⁷⁹

Yet with all that, more than one woman would have echoed Carpenter's grateful "Am glad I am not an ox driver."⁸⁰ Men were charged with "the care of wagons and stock, driving and droving, leadership and protection of the family and party." On a normal day of travel:

the men of each family were up between four and five in the morning or cut their oxen from the herd and drive them to the wagon for yoking and hitching. The wagon and running gear had to

⁷⁷ Myres, *Ho for California*, pp. 159-160.

⁷⁸ Vincent Geiger and Wakeman Bryarly (July 19, 1849), quoted in Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II.

⁷⁹ Carpenter, quoted in Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, p. 79.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

be thoroughly checked over.... Normally a man drove each wagon ... [and] some men herded and drove the stock to the rear of the line. A good morning march began by seven and continued until the noon hour, when drivers pulled up, unhitched their oxen, set the stock to grazing, and settled down for the midday meal the women produced.... Driving and droving were strenuous and demanding occupations.... Most [men] drove by walking alongside the trail.... Walking the fifteen or so miles of trail each day was, in the best of conditions, enough to tire any man..... Driving, and especially herding the cattle, meant eating large portions of dust: "It has been immensely disagreeable for the drivers today for a Northwest wind drove the dust in clouds into their faces ... Am glad that I am not an ox driver."⁸¹

City of Rocks provided a welcome diversion from these travel rituals. Carpenter wrote:

While the stock was being cared for the women and children wandered off to enjoy the sights of the city.... We were ... spellbound with the beauty and strangeness of it all....⁸²

J. Goldsborough Bruff "dined hastily, on bread & water, and while others rested, ... explored and sketched some of these queer rocks."⁸³ Young Harriet Sherrill Ward was similarly impressed. In a joyful description she painted a camp scene very different from the scenes that had preceded and those that would follow:

At eave we encamped in Pyramid Circle, a delightful place indeed. ...Our tents and wagons grouped together and a merry party tripping the light fantastic toe upon the green, whose cheerful, happy voices echo from the hills around us, presents a scene altogether picturesque and novel."⁸⁴

Emigrants consistently referred to the city as one of the memorable scenic wonders of a phenomenal journey: "This is one of the greatest curiosities on the road" wrote Eliza Ann McAuley in 1852.⁸⁵ Others agreed:

[Our] camp was pitched in a unique spot between Independence and Hangtown, one to be remembered along with Ash Hollow and Independence Rock for genuine singularity. ... *'The manuscript of God remains Writ large in waves and woods and rocks.'*⁸⁶

⁸¹ Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, pp. 71-72.

⁸² Myres, *Ho for California*, pp. 159-160.

⁸³ J. Goldsborough Bruff, 8/29/1849, quoted in Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II.

⁸⁴ Harriet Sherrill Ward, 8/19/1853, quoted in Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II.

⁸⁵ Quoted in Merle W. Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II, p. 8.

⁸⁶ Archer Butler Hulbert, *Forty-Niners, The Chronicle of the California Trail* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1932), pp. 185-186, excerpt provided by City of Rocks National Reserve.

Encamped in Granite City one of the finest natural places of its kind in the World, I banter the World to beat it.⁸⁷

Within the Circle is one of the coldest springs seen on the route — and the Circle is surrounded on all sides with lofty mountains, covered with ever green Cedars; rendering the whole one of the most beautiful, grand, pictures[que] and delightful scenes I ever saw.⁸⁸

The City was unusual not only as a geographic oddity but also as a register of those who had gone before and as a rare and valued opportunity to communicate with those who followed. Count Leonetto Cipriani described "a cave used as a mail deposit... There were many letters, but none from the wagon company, a sure sign that it had not yet come by." The cave, at the base of what J.G. Bruff christened Sarcophagus Rock, is no longer visible, presumed buried by years of erosion and deposit. Yet elsewhere in the city vestiges of historic graffiti remain, marked with wheel grease or tar:

I came to the junction of the roads [California Trail and Salt Lake Alternate], where there were many sticks set up, having slips of paper in them, with the names of passengers, and occasionally letters to emigrants still behind. [A. Delano, July 23, 1849, excerpt provided by City of Rocks National Reserve.]

From the human standpoint, this Pyramid Circle is of greater interest because here we have another registration book of transcontinental travel. Rocks, walls, and monuments are covered with thousands of names and dates, and bear, as well, messages to on-coming friends and acquaintances. Some names date back to the earliest explorers. ... The road from the Missouri River westward is lined with penciled messages or names and dates of passage... but Pyramid Circle is the volume *de luxe*.⁸⁹

Although names and dates of travel are the dominant extant inscriptions, an occasional message remains legible, including O.E. Dockstater's terse "Wife Wanted." Emigrants also platted the city, signing rocks as "NAPOLEON'S CASTLE," and "CITY HOTEL"; those monoliths nearest the central trail were the most heavily inscribed.⁹⁰

The larger countryside surrounding the City of Rocks, viewed in mid-August — at the end of the summer drought — was greeted with substantially less enthusiasm than the city itself. The vast majority of emigrants were "driven by a farmer's motives," and judged the passing countryside through the filter of what they had left behind in the well-watered east and what they expected to

⁸⁷ Dr. John Hudson Wayman (July 12, 1852), quoted in Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II.

⁸⁸ John E. Dalton, July 26, 1852, quoted in Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 49.

⁸⁹ Hulbert, *Forty-Niners, The Chronicle of the California Trail*, pp. 185-186.

⁹⁰ *California & Overland Diaries of Count Leonetto Cipriani, 1853-1871*, excerpt provided to HRA by Kathleen Durfee, City of Rocks National Reserve; J. Goldsborough Bruff, 8/29/1849 and Bryon McKinstry, 8/3/1850, quoted in Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II.

find in verdant California. They noted favorably the adequate grass along the Snake and Raft rivers but disdained the lands lying beyond the immediate water courses.⁹¹

In 1847, Chester Ingersoll reported:

... Since leaving the South Pass, it has been one entire volcanic region, all burnt to a cinder. The rock and stone look like cinders from a furnace. We have not had any rain for two months worth noticing.⁹²

H.B. Scharmann cautioned:

The land ... from Fort Laramie to California is not worth a [farmer's notice], I think. It consists of nothing but desert-land and bare mountains covered with boulders and red soil which makes them resemble volcanoes. The best thing the traveller can do is to hurry on as fast as possible from one river to the other.⁹³

Leander Loomis added:

And we believe that some day there will be [gold] Discoverys made through here that will astonish the world. [I]f there is not something of this kind, in this country, it is folly in our opinions, for our Government, to try to settle it with White men, —for there is no timber through here, and if there was, there is (comparitive) no land fit for farming purposes from the Missouri to the Humboldt.⁹⁴

Only the far-sighted recognized that grazing "would claim a high place on these lands."⁹⁵ The first generation of emigrants left their messages on the rocks and hurried to the next river, voicing no inclination to stay.

*"When we had all gratified our curiosity, we bid the place adieu and rode away."*⁹⁶

⁹¹ Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, p. 17.

⁹² Ingersoll, *Overland to California in 1847*, pp. 35-37.

⁹³ H.B. Scharmann, *Scharmann's Overland Journey to California: From the Pages of a Pioneer's Diary*, Margaret Hoff Zimmermann and Erich W. Zimmermann, translators, (Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1918, 1969), p. 26.

⁹⁴ Leander Vaness Loomis, *Birmingham Journal*, 1850, p. 76, excerpt provided by City of Rocks National Reserve.

⁹⁵ Charles Fremont, quoted in Fradkin, *Sagebrush Country*, p. 84.

⁹⁶ Charles Nelson Teeter (September 1865), quoted in Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 40.

"The Indian Menace"

There was reason to hurry. Although Indian danger along the overland trail has been greatly exaggerated (many more emigrants succumbed to drowning, disease, and accident; reminiscences of overland travel are much more likely to contain accounts of massacres than daily diaries), the Northern Shoshone and Bannock Indians between Fort Hall and the Humboldt were "considered among the most troublesome of the entire trail." Ninety percent of all armed conflict took place west of South Pass.⁹⁷

The California and Oregon trails passed through the center of the tribal country of the Bannock (a branch of the Northern Paiute) and of the Northern Shoshone. Until approximately 1851, their interaction with emigrants was friendly, if cautious. In 1850, Hugh Skinner, reported that Shoshone Indians directed his party to water. Throughout the 1840s, emigrants hired the Western Shoshone to cut and carry grass and to watch and herd emigrant stock during overnight encampments.⁹⁸ In 1851, Caroline Richardson reported that "we are continually hearing of the depredations of the Indians but we have not seen one yet."⁹⁹

As emigrant numbers increased through the early 1850s, the drain on the tribes' traditional grazing resources intensified, leaving Indian lands impoverished. Increased emigrant numbers also spelled increased white/American Indian contact: emigrants reported a dramatic increase in the number of stock stolen, while the Indians complained of unprovoked attacks, and federal Indian agents complained of the unethical behavior of white traders "who plied the natives with whiskey and sold them guns and ammunition."¹⁰⁰ Bannock and Shoshone hostility was further fanned by federal overtures to other tribes. In 1858 Indian Agent C. H. Miller argued that the government owed the Bannock just compensation for the destruction of their traditional winter range and the depletion of their hunting grounds. Without such payments, Miller and the "mountaineers" with whom he had consulted believed that the Indians would attack the first trains out of Fort Hall in 1859, in a desperate bid to prevent the destruction of those resources upon which they depended absolutely. Furthermore, "it has been in the most manly and direct manner that these Indians have said that if emigrants, as has usually been the case, shoot members of their tribes, they will kill them when they

⁹⁷ Unruh, *The Plains Across*, pp. 175, 408-414; Myres, *Ho for California!*, p. 165, note #41; Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, p. 32.

⁹⁸ Unruh, *The Plains Across*, pp. 157-160.

⁹⁹ Caroline Richardson quoted in Unruh, *The Plains Across*, p. 175.

¹⁰⁰ Indian Agent Elias Wampole, Utilla Agency, quoted in Brigham D. Madsen, *The Bannock of Idaho* (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1958), p. 74.

can." The federal government failed to negotiate successfully with either the Bannock or the Northern tribe, and the attacks continued.¹⁰¹

Most emigrants died individually, in isolated incidents, yet it was the massacres that captured public attention. In 1852, 22 emigrants were killed in the Tule Lake Massacre, and 13 in the Lost River Massacre; in 1854, 19 died in the Ward Massacre, 25 miles east of Fort Boise; in 1861, 18 members of the Otter-Van Orman train were killed 50 miles west of Salmon Falls on the Snake River.¹⁰² The massacres were generally attributed to the Bannock and Shoshone, although

¹⁰¹ Madsen, *The Bannock of Idaho*, p. 113.

¹⁰² Tales of the purported Almo Massacre along the banks of Almo Creek three miles east of the City of Rocks dominate local tradition. The 1861 massacre is said to have involved 300 emigrants, possibly Shakers from the eastern seaboard. All but five of these are said to have died after a four-day standoff in which Arapahoe, Cheyenne, Ute, Shoshone, Paiute, Cayuse, and the Bannock Indians (seeking revenge for the unprovoked murder of an Indian brave in the Montpelier Country), rushed a passing train, denied the emigrants water, shot them as they crawled toward nearby springs, and ultimately tossed the bodies in the dry wells that the emigrants had frantically dug within the wagon circle. Local tradition establishes that three men, a woman, and her babe-in-arms survived, after a harrowing crawl to the Raft River and safety.

C. S. Walgamott is thought to have written the first official account of the battle when he reported that "William Eddy Johnston ... was boyhood friends with an Indian lad who had participated in the fight.... Meeting again as grown men, the Indian ... revealed some information about the battle of Almo Creek" (C. S. Walgamott, "The Massacre at Almo Creek," n.d. [1927], no publisher, p. 122, clipping received 7/2/1970, Cassia County Vertical File, IHS). In 1872, W. E. Johnston visited the site and claimed that traces of the battle were "very much" in evidence. In 1887 the Johnston family moved to Almo Creek, and purchased the purported battle site. In the leveling and plowing of the fields, many guns were said to have been uncovered (A. W. Dawson, "Historians Weigh Fact Against Theories in Story About Massacre of 300 Pioneers," *The Idaho Statesman*, Boise, Idaho, 2/14/1971, Cassia County Vertical File, IHS). City of Rocks pioneer C. S. Walgamott reported that in 1875, "evidence of the conflict was marked plainly by trenches thrown up under each wagon as they were arranged in circles."

Although the massacre is reported as fact in most local histories of the region until the late 1970s, and was an accepted part of the local school curriculum, it is increasingly questioned by historians. The 300 victims vastly exceeds the casualty count of all other Overland Trail Indian/emigrant conflicts, yet after extensive research historian Brigham Madsen noted that the massacre was not reported in any of the contemporary papers that so faithfully reported earlier, subsequent, (and much less deadly) attacks, nor did it appear in military records (Brigham Madsen, *The "Almo Massacre" Revisited*, n.d., on file at the City of Rocks National Reserve).

Madsen further argued that the legend may have gained credibility in the 1930s, as a means of attracting tourists' attention to the area (*High Country News*, 4/4/1994). Madsen's findings have since been supported by Arthur Hart and Larry Jones of the Idaho State Historical Society and Edwin C. Bearss, chief historian of the National Park Service. The chairman of the Shoshone chairman Keith Tinno has also demanded an apology, noting that the tribe has no oral tradition of the battle and that "we were being accused of something that we'd never done. We need an apology, a public type of apology saying we were accused of something we didn't do" (Keith Tinno quoted in *Times-News*, Twin Falls, Idaho, 1/8/1994).

In 1938, the Sons and Daughters of Idaho Pioneers erected a monument to the victims at the alleged battlefield site. Brigham Madsen and the Shoshone tribe have recently petitioned for the monument's removal. These requests have been denied by local residents who maintain that the monument and the massacre, whether fact or folklore, are an important part of the area's history and culture (Della Mullinix, president, Sons and Daughters of Idaho Pioneers, quoted in *High Country News*, 4/4/1994).

eyewitnesses, Indian agents, army personnel, and the Oregon legislature reported the participation of "out-cast whites" who "led on ... bands of marauding and plundering savages."¹⁰³

Although the threat of death was of greatest concern, many more emigrants would experience the loss of their livestock: "it was the art of stealing horses which, at least according to emigrant testimony, the Indians had absolutely mastered."¹⁰⁴ Such theft was a significant blow, depriving emigrants of a food source, a transportation source, and the oxen, mules, and horses that pulled their wagons. In 1860, while traveling along the Raft River, emigrant James Evans wrote,

Indians hostile through all this region; came around camp every night, but could not be seen during the day. They stole 50 horses from one company. We kept two men constantly with the cattle whenever they were loose, and every man who had horses kept them constantly under his eye during the day ... Kept two men watching around the encampment during the night with double barrelled shot guns, and revolvers.¹⁰⁵

Others in the City of Rocks region were not so vigilant — or so lucky. On September 7, 1860 "Indians" who spoke English well attacked a four-wagon train in the City of Rocks vicinity, stealing 139 cattle and six horses. A month later, the *Deseret News* reported an attack on a wagon train encamped near the City of Rocks: "except for hunger, thirst and terror there were no casualties... The emigrants did, however, lose nearly all of their possessions."¹⁰⁶ In September of 1862, the *Deseret News* reported that Indians were pasturing over 400 head of stolen emigrant cattle on land just east of the City of Rocks.¹⁰⁷ By October of 1862, the *Virginia City Territorial Enterprise* had warned that "every train that has passed over that portion of the route in the City of Rocks since the 1st of August has had trouble with the Indians."¹⁰⁸

In 1860, California-bound emigrants successfully petitioned for Army protection. Lieutenant Colonel M. T. Howe and 150 soldiers from Salt Lake City's Camp Floyd assumed responsibility for the main overland trail and the Lander Cutoff. Howe established a depot at the Portneuf River from

¹⁰³ Unruh, *The Plains Across*, pp. 181-195.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

¹⁰⁵ "Letter from James A. Evans, 1860," in *Diary References to City of Rocks*, compiled by Larry Jones and submitted to the Pacific Northwest Region of the National Park Service, Seattle, Washington.

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in Arthur Hart, "Massacre legend seems overblown," *The Idaho Statesman*, 6/25/1979, Vertical File: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS.

¹⁰⁷ Little, "A Historical Overview of Livestock Use in the Area of City of Rocks National Reserve From Introduction to 1907," p. 10.

¹⁰⁸ A. W. Dawson, Director Cassia County Historical Society, "City of Rocks Noted For Indian Ambushes," (ca. 1970), Vertical File: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS.

which he escorted trains along the road between Fort Hall and the Humboldt Sink, through the City of Rocks.¹⁰⁹

In 1862, Major Edward McGarry's US Army expedition killed 24 Indians in the City of Rocks vicinity, in retaliation for the Indian attacks.¹¹⁰ Two years later, as the Indian assaults continued, Brigadier-General Connor ordered the Second California Volunteer Cavalry to "take steps to capture or kill the male adults of five lodges of Snake Indians who have for years infested the roads in that vicinity, and who have of late been stealing from and attacking emigrants to Idaho."¹¹¹ The battle of Bear River, "the severest and most bloody of any which has occurred with the Indians west of the Mississippi" ensued on January 29, 1863.¹¹² Although all the chiefs involved in the battle were Shoshone, historian Brigham Madsen reports that "the significance to the Bannock [lay] ... in the effective and merciless manner in which the troops of the United States could and did check the resistance of a hostile tribe."¹¹³ In July of 1863, United States Indian agents and military personnel negotiated treaties with Chief Washakie and the Eastern Shoshoni and with Chief Pocatello of the Northwest Shoshoni. In October of that same year, treaties were signed with the Western Shoshoni at Ruby Valley and the Gosiute Shoshone of Tuilla Valley.

By August of 1863, four Bannock chiefs informed James D. Doty of the Utah Indian Superintendency that their people "were in a destitute condition and ... desired peace with the whites and aid from the government." Chief Tosokwauberah (Le Grand Coquin) and two sub-chiefs, Taghee and Matigund signed the treaty of Soda Springs on October 14, 1863. The treaty established an estimated total Bannock population of one thousand, to whom the United States government would pay five thousand dollars¹¹⁴ a year in annuity goods in compensation "for damages done to their pasture lands and hunting grounds." Article III of the treaty "exacted a promise from the Bannock that they would not molest travelers along the Oregon and California trails and along the new roads between Salt Lake City and the mines near Boise City and Beaver Head."¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁹ David Chance, "Historical Sketch of the Kelton Road," 1993, draft manuscript prepared for the National Park Service Pacific Northwest Region, p. 120; Unruh, *The Plains Across*, pp. 220, 243.

¹¹⁰ Arthur Hart, "Massacre legend seems overblown," *The Idaho Statesman*, 6/25/1979, Vertical File: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS.

¹¹¹ Quoted in Madsen, *The Bannock of Idaho*, p. 130.

¹¹² James D. Doty, Utah Indian Superintendency, quoted in Madsen, *The Bannock of Idaho*, p. 139

¹¹³ Madsen, *The Bannock of Idaho*, p. 142.

¹¹⁴ This five thousand came from the ten-thousand-dollar annuity promised to the Eastern Shoshoni on July 2, thus cutting the annuity to the Eastern Shoshoni in half.

¹¹⁵ Madsen, *The Bannock of Idaho*, p. 145-147.

Perspectives from Indian Country

TO THE PUBLIC: From information received at this department, deemed sufficiently reliable to warrant me in so doing, I consider it my duty to warn all persons contemplating the crossing of the plains this fall, to Utah or the Pacific Coast, that there is good reason to apprehend hostilities on the part of the Bannock and Shoshone or Snake Indians, as well as the Indians upon the plains and along the Platte river.

The Indians referred to have, during the past summer, committed several robberies and murders; they are numerous, powerful, and warlike, and should they generally assume a hostile attitude are capable of rendering the emigrant routes across the plains extremely perilous; hence this warning. [Indian Commissioner Charles E. Mix, 1862, quoted in Brigham Madsen, *The Bannock of Idaho*, p. 128.]

■ ■ ■ ■

These Indians [Bannock and Shoshoni] twelve years ago were the avowed friends of the White Man I have had their Young Men in my Employment as Hunters Horse Guards Guides &c &c I have traversed the length & breadth of their Entire Country with large bands of Stock unmolested. Their present hostile attitude can in a great Measure be attributed to the treatment they have recd from unprincipled White Men passing through their Country.... Outrages have been committed by White Men that the heart would Shudder to record. [Major John Owen (1861), quoted Madsen, *The Bannock of Idaho*, p. 124.]

The Kelton Road — "The Stage Era"

The flow of emigrant traffic through the City of Rocks ebbed after 1852 and virtually ceased following the 1869 completion of the transcontinental Union Pacific Railroad.¹¹⁶ The City of Rocks remained an important transportation center, however, serving as a relay point and rest stop on the mail and stage route connecting the railhead at Kelton, Utah with the boom mining communities of the Boise Basin.

Since the founding of Salt Lake City, the Salt Lake Alternate to the Overland Trail had served as a freight route connecting the interior basin with the Pacific coast. Beginning in September of 1850, George Chorpenning and Absalom Woodward's government-sponsored mail wagons ran from Fort Bridger to Sacramento, by way of the Salt Lake Alternate and Granite Pass.¹¹⁷ The route was abandoned in September of 1853, in response to harsh winters and Indian attacks, yet resumed briefly in 1858, when the Mormon War disrupted the San Bernardino route. Concord coaches or four-horse mud wagons passed through the region once a week, from July to December, 1858, when the route was again abandoned in favor of a central Nevada route west of Provo.¹¹⁸

Beginning ca. 1860, a local version of the famous Pony Express also ran through the City of Rocks, along a route that extended from Boise to Brigham City, Utah, by way of Rock Creek, Oakley, Goose Creek, City of Rocks stage station, and the Raft River Headwaters, and Kelton Pass.¹¹⁹

The discovery of gold in the Boise Basin in 1862 created a new market for Salt Lake goods, which in turn, resulted in a modification in the abandoned Chorpenning & Woodward route. Circa 1864, Ben Holladay of the Holladay Overland Mail and Express Company initiated a run from the railroad at Kelton, Utah, to Boise Basin mining communities. Holladay's coaches traveled to the City

¹¹⁶ Newell Dayley of Basin reports that as a child of six (circa. 1890?) he encountered a three-wagon train on the California Trail, crossing Junction Valley just north of Granite Pass. (Newell Dayley, interviewed by A. W. and Lillian Dawson, January 28, 1968, Oral History #182, Idaho State Historical Society Library and Archives, Boise, Idaho. [Copyright held by Cassia County Historical Society, Burley, Idaho.]) Such small, isolated trains traveled the California Trail until mass production of the automobile made such travel unnecessary, even for the very poor or the very eccentric. Overland travel, however, as a mass movement and nationally significant event, ended (practically and symbolically) with the driving of the golden spike.

¹¹⁷ Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), p. 13.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 14.

¹¹⁹ Abraham C. Anderson, "The Pioneer Life of George W. Goodhart," *Trails of Early Idaho*, 1940, p. 298, excerpt provided by City of Rocks National Reserve; Sudweeks, "The Raft River in Idaho History," p. 304; The national Pony Express ran from St. Joseph Missouri to Sacramento by way of Salt Lake City, central Nevada, Carson City, and Sacramento, bypassing southern Idaho completely. Ray Allen Billington, *Westward Expansion. A History of the American Frontier* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), p. 641.

of Rocks region by way of the Salt Lake Alternate (Figure 8). Here they turned north, rather than west, proceeding over Lyman Pass (a gentle breach of the Albion Mountains), to Rock Creek along the Snake River. John Hailey of Boise purchased the Boise to Kelton route from C. M. Lockwood in 1868.¹²⁰

The 240-mile trip took approximately 40 hours, with stage stations strategically located 10 to 15 miles apart at sites possessing sufficient water and grass for the horses. "Home Stations" were situated approximately 50 to 60 miles apart and provided lodging for drivers and a meal for passengers.

The City of Rocks Home Station was located at the head of Emigrant Canyon, adjacent to the same spring that had induced the emigrants to establish camp. Chorpenning & Woodward may have constructed the station as early as 1858 when they "stocked [their] route past City of Rocks with stations every twenty miles or so (Figure 9)."¹²¹

By the 1870s, "Mr. and Mrs. William Trotter" served five meals a day at the City of Rocks station. Driver C. S. Walgamott wrote that "the buildings were of logs and, as it was handy for material, they were built commodiously but with low ceilings. The sitting room, or barroom was about thirty feet long east and west by some fourteen feet wide. The large fireplace in the west end, the dining room, kitchen, and three bedrooms were as commodious." Beds, prepared for snow-bound passengers, were said to have been clean and comfortable and the red napkins on the tables "suggestive of everything clean and luxurious."¹²²

City of Rocks Stage Station

The greatest annoyance one meets on this route is the station-houses where meals are served, as it is almost impossible to get a decent repast at any of them. The usual meal is fat ham and eggs, or boiled pork, potatoes, and bread that looks as if it were baked in black ashes, while the coffee is the very vilest stuff. One place at which I stopped did not furnish any fresh meat, although hundreds of cattle were grouped around the house; and no milk although several cows with calves were within 20 yards.... After a ride of 13 hours [from City of Rocks] I reached Kelton ... and was pleased to find myself on a line of railway once more. ["City of Rocks' Impresses Early Day Idaho Traveler," Vertical File: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS.]

■■■

As it came near Christmas time, Mrs. Trotter and the woman cook began great preparations for Christmas dinner. Turkeys were ordered from Corinne, Utah, and everything on the market was sent for. The women folks made fruit cakes and prepared to make stearn pudding and mince pie.... [Christmas day] we meet the stage on time and when we, on our return trip, arrived at City of Rocks we were met with all kinds of Christmas greeting, and on that Christmas evening, sixty years ago, we sat down to a Christmas dinner that only youth and vigor could do justice to. After the meal we went into the living room, where Glove-Maker Jim had erected a Christmas tree, and decorated it with cranberries and pop corn, and on its branches hung little tokens of remembrance to each one present.... An old fiddle was brought out and the ladies sang as I played and Jim kept time by tapping a scribe-awl on a carpenter's square. [C. S. Walgamott, *Six Decades Back*, 1936, p. 27, on file at the City of Rocks National Reserve.]

¹²⁰ Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), p. 18; Dwayne Ward, "History of Almo, Idaho," seminar paper Utah State University, [1936], Utah State University Special Collections, Logan, Utah, pp. 5-6; Billington, *Westward Expansion*, pp. 641-642. For a complete discussion of John Hailey's stagecoach endeavors, please see Chance, "Historical Sketch of the Kelton Road."

¹²¹ Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), p. 14.

¹²² Walgamott, *Six Decades Back*, p. 24; Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's settlement south of Almo," p. 102; Donaldson, quoted in Chance, "Historical Sketch of the Kelton Road," p. 17.

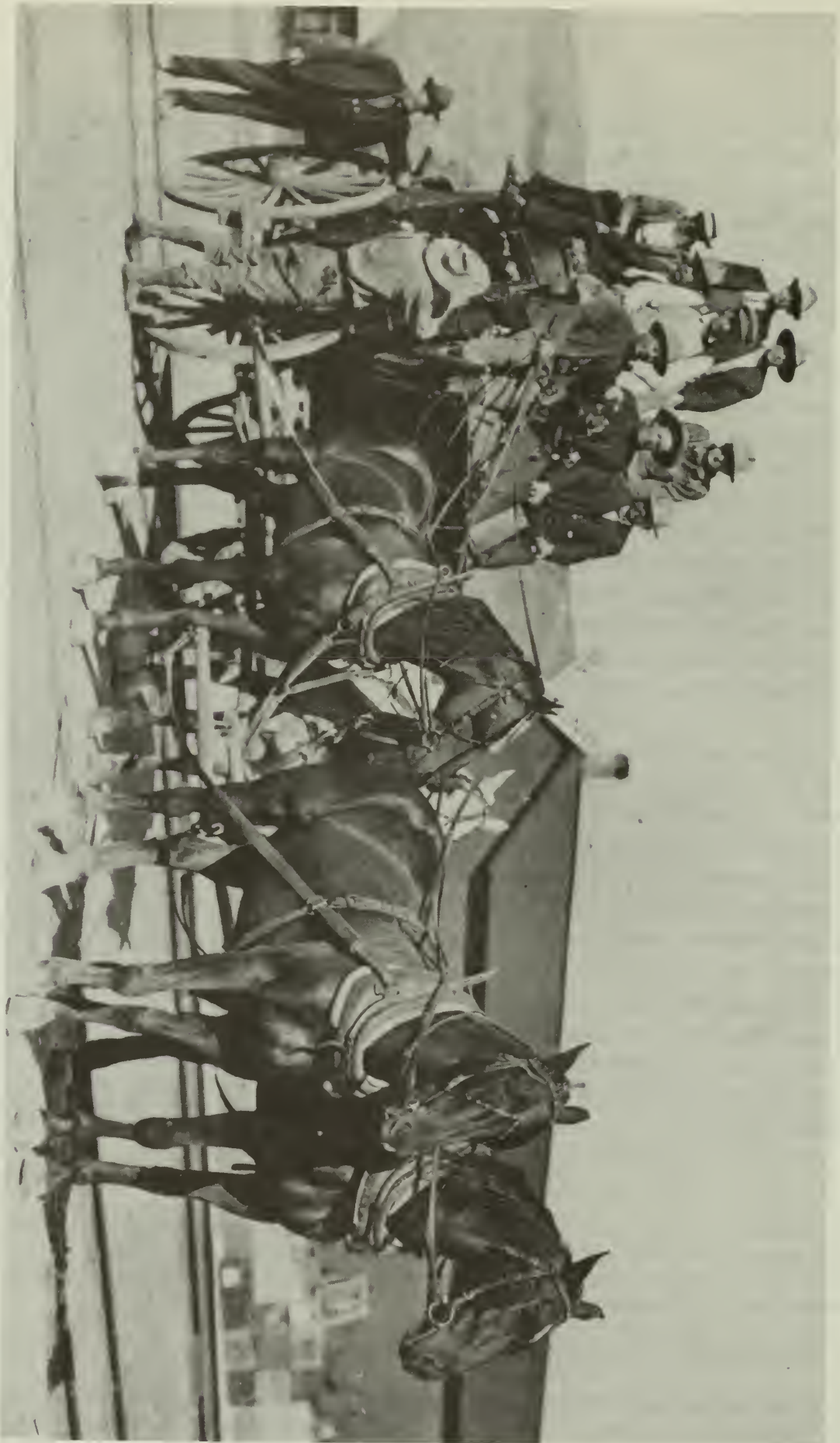


Figure 8. Concord Coach (Idaho State Historical Society photograph #69-161.1).

*Concord Coaches "revolutionized western travel... [They were] far better suited to journeys across plains and deserts than any earlier vehicle. The wheels were heavy, with broad iron tires that would not sink in soft sand, and were set wide apart to keep the stage from tipping. The iron-reinforced wooden body was swung on leather thoroughbraces which absorbed some of the worst shocks and was provided with leather curtains. ... The gaudily painted red or green vehicles were pulled by four galloping horses or half a dozen scampering mules... (Billington, *Westward Expansion. A History of the American Frontier*, pp. 637-638.)*

Hailey and his successors ran the stage through the City of Rocks, between May and October, until at least 1881. During the winter months, when deep snow blocked Lyman Pass, Hailey routed through traffic along the Albion freight route; intermediate service to the Goose Creek area, however, remained in effect.¹²³ Walgamott described that winter routine:

When I peeked out the window in the morning the snow was sifting along with the wind flurries, in places forming great drifts; and the side of the mountain looked like a rough sea of snow... I took my seat on the outrigger and at certain places indicated by the driver I would poke a willow down into the snow, just leaving the brush or part of the willow sticking up. When we encountered a drift and the leaders could plunge through we would always make it. If it was too deep the horses would always lie down, and then I would take off my fur coat and get among their legs and tramp the snow solid around them... We would travel east toward the Oakley station until we met the eastbound stage, which would be a coach. Here the passengers, mail, and express from the sled would be transferred to the coach, which would be turned back; and the driver who came with me would go on and I would return with the eastern driver, the eastbound passengers, and the mail.¹²⁴

The Kelton to Boise stage route was largely abandoned by 1883, when the Oregon Short Line Railroad reached the Snake River corridor, north of the City of Rocks. In June of 1890, however, Elba resident Frederick Ottley "drove stage" between Kelton and Albion, indicating that the stage continued to service those communities isolated from the rail lines. However, this local route made no use of the City of Rocks station.¹²⁵ Circa 1921, homesteader Joseph Moon dismantled the outbuildings, using the logs in construction of his homestead.¹²⁶

¹²³ *Idaho Avalanche* (Silver City, Idaho), March 16, 1878, Cassia County Vertical File, IHS.

¹²⁴ Walgamott, *Six Decades Back*, p. 26.

¹²⁵ Ethel Cottle, "Sketches of Malta and the Raft River Valley," Manuscript #2735 374, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah, p. 7; Diary of Frederick Hugh Ottley, 1890, Manuscript #1836, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.

¹²⁶ P. C. Lind, "News From Lynn," *The Oakley News*, Oakley, Idaho, 12/16/1968, p. 4, Cassia County Vertical File, IHS.

Buried Treasure

*[While touring City of Rocks] I was startled by the appearance of three men, who were digging at the base of a crag [for a treasure] supposed to have been buried somewhere in the vicinity about two years previously by a party of highwaymen who had robbed the Montana stage. ... The present party had undertaken the search and had been at it then for two months. ... As a last resource, had consulted a medium or clairvoyant, and they were then plying pick and shovel where she had recommended them. ... This incident completed the picture of the city for me for it was the only thing lacking to give it the air of wild romance which so readily accorded the lonely enclosed landscape.*¹²⁷

Tales of stage robberies complete with lost loot buried beneath one of the City's rocky crags have formed part of local lore for almost 120 years. Although versions of the robbery differ, most agree that the Kelton stage was robbed circa 1878 of \$90,000-200,000 in gold bullion bound for a U.S. military camp in Boise. One bandit (in some accounts, two) was killed in the confrontation. The second was captured days later after reportedly burying the treasure at the base of what soon became known as Treasure Rock — a site revealed to his jailers just before his death. The legend is plausible — the Albion-Kelton stage was robbed, for example, in 1882 and the robbers captured in the vicinity; so plausible, that by 1929 "dozens of men [had] dug for the treasure. If any one of them discovered it, he has kept the discovery a secret."¹²⁸ Since 1880, the Legend of Treasure Rock has provided the "air of wild romance which so readily accord[s] the lonely enclosed landscape."¹²⁹

Open Range Cattle Industry

*[We] decided to lay over for several days in order to rest our cattle before entering the Snake desert. The mountains here afford a magnificent summer range, the bunch grass waving like a wheat field and with water abundant.*¹³⁰

The "pioneer" herdsman in the Raft River region were American Indians, who first grazed large herds of horses and later the cattle procured from overland emigrants; long after the Indians had been ushered to Fort Hall, these wild herds roamed the City of Rocks region feeding on the

¹²⁷ "Extracts from Diary of J. M. Murphy," ca. 1880, reprinted in *The Oakley Herald*, 12/1930, Vertical File: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS.

¹²⁸ Charles Brown, "Oakley's City of Rocks, Little Known to Idaho," *The Idaho Sunday Statesman*, 1/17/1926, Vertical File: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS.

¹²⁹ "Extracts from Diary of J. M. Murphy," ca. 1880, reprinted in *The Oakley Herald*. Treasure Rock is located immediately adjacent to the primary City of Rocks access road, within the NWNWSE section 31, T15S R24E.

¹³⁰ *The Cattle Drives of David Shirk*, September 1871, quoted in Wells, "History of the City of Rocks" (1990), Appendix II, p. 11.

native bunchgrass (*agropyrum spicatum*), white sage (*artemisia cana*), buckbrush (Antelope Bitterbrush; *purshia tridentata*) and shadscale (*Atriplex Confertifolia*)."¹³¹ By the 1850s, the captive and inflated market of the California mining camps had attracted eastern stockmen, who drove their herds of Texas longhorns and (less often) sheep to the Sacramento Valley by one of three routes: the Gila and Old Spanish trails through Arizona and southern California and the Northern Trail, along the emigrant trail through the City of Rocks.¹³²

As Richard Dana and the other California boosters had promised, the Golden State's agricultural potential was enormous. When in the 1860s the West's gold camps shifted from the Sacramento Valley to Idaho, Nevada, and Montana, California ranchers were ready to herd their cattle "east." Here they competed with the Texas ranchers for a share of the Boise Basin, Pierce, and Virginia City markets.¹³³ The California stock drives traveled from Junction Valley to the Raft River Valley along Trail Creek, through the City of Rocks; Texas drives passed just east, through the Raft River Valley.

By the 1870s, cattle competed with sheep on these eastward drives. California sheepmen most commonly trailed their bands on one of three routes: along Goose Creek (west) through Oakley; along the California Trail through the City of Rocks, and east along the Salt Lake Alternate.¹³⁴

"Cattle Dealer" James Q. Shirley was the first non-Indian to use the City of Rocks as a home base. In 1869, Shirley and his "hired man" trailed 13,000 head of Texas longhorns to "a place called the City of Rocks." Here they "made camp," raising a garden and utilizing "The Cove" below Graham Peak as a natural corral. When the census taker knocked in the spring of 1880, Shirley shared the City of Rocks camp with seven "stockherders." The Keogh brothers purchased Shirley's cattle and landholdings in 1881, forming the Keogh Ranch.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's settlement south of Almo," p. 67.

¹³² Little, "A Historical Overview of Livestock Use in the Area of City of Rocks National Reserve From Introduction to 1907," pp. 5-5A; Minidoka National Forest Personnel, "History of the Minidoka National Forest," p. 4, Supervisor's Office Sawtooth National Forest; "The Trip to California, 1860, Martha Missouri Moore," *Covered Wagon Women*, pp. 259-261, excerpt provided by City of Rocks National Reserve.

¹³³ Little, "A Historical Overview of Livestock Use in the Area of City of Rocks National Reserve From Introduction to 1907," pp. 1-2.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹³⁵ Cottle, "Sketches of Malta and the Raft River Valley," p. 1; *A Pause for Reflection*, p. 615; U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Cassia County, Marsh Basin Enumeration District," *10th Census of Population*, 1900, National Archives Micro-film Laboratory.

Neighboring cattle ranches included the Emery Ranch in the Raft River Valley, A. D. Norton and M. G. Robinson's outfit along the Snake River at Rock Creek, and the Shoe Sole and Winecup ranches located in the Goose Creek Valley west of the City of Rocks. (By 1882, the Winecup ranch alone had 175,000 cattle ranging from the Goose Creek Mountains (Albion Mountains) on the east to the Bruneau River on the west.) These operations used the City of Rocks region as summer range for their cattle and ranch horses, constructing stock ponds, corrals, and the "line cabins" that provided food and shelter to herders.¹³⁶

By the 1880s, the Raft River Valley, with its abundant plantings of alfalfa hay, "became known as the best place in the west to winter sheep... There were free open range privileges and the general area was safe for the bands." Sheepmen, primarily headquartered in northern Utah, also relied upon the Goose Creek Range and the City of Rocks as summer range.¹³⁷

Stock trails historically included that from Junction Valley to the Raft River Valley, along Trail Creek; a trail up the Raft River Valley to Starrh's Ferry, on the Snake River north of present Burley (from which cattle and sheep were shipped to the Wood River Mining District near Hailey); and a trail roughly following the Kelton Road, leading to shipping points on the Union Pacific Railroad.¹³⁸

The drought of 1886-1891 and the endless winters of 1882, 1886, and 1889 brought "years of continual overgrazing" and winter range use to a screeching halt.¹³⁹ The "old time cowmen" reported losses of 50 to 90 percent during the winter of 1882. The Winecup, which branded 38,000 calves in 1885, branded 68 in 1891; the nascent local sheep industry was similarly devastated.¹⁴⁰ In one of the West's great ironies, the fenced fields of the settlers — anathema of the free range cowboy — saved the Idaho stock industry:

¹³⁶ Kathleen Durfee, compiler, "Cowboys of the Early Cattle Days of Idaho," nd., p. 3, excerpt provided by City of Rocks National Reserve; *A Pause for Reflection*, p. 71. As late as the 1960s, small log "line cabins" constructed to provide shelter for range cowboys, remained visible from the road between Oakley and Emory Canyon, just west of the City of Rocks.

¹³⁷ John Mortenson, "History of the Range Lands of the Albion Mountain Division and the Surrounding Territory," October 22, 1935, File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (1924-1938), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho; Kathleen Durfee, compiler, "Cowboys of the Early Cattle Days of Idaho," nd., p. 4, excerpt provided by City of Rocks National Reserve.

¹³⁸ "Idaho Range Cattle Industry, Early Cattle Days in Idaho," (Handwritten notation indicates: written by Professor C. W. Hodgson, Animal Husbandry Department, University of Idaho, ca. 1948), Vertical File: Cattle History, IHS, p. 4.

¹³⁹ Andrew Jensen, compiler, "Almo Ward History," in *Almo Ward, Cassia East Stake, Historical Records and Minutes*, 1882-1971, Manuscript #LR10590 2, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.; Hodgson, "Idaho Range Cattle Industry, Early Cattle Days in Idaho," pp. 8-10.

The necessity of providing feed for range stock under Idaho conditions was learned by bitter experience in the 80's and put into practice during the 90's. The change increased operating expenses but put the range industry on a safe and sane basis. ... The cattle are winter fed. Operation costs are greatly increased but the cattle are improved and the danger of heavy losses removed.¹⁴¹

Settlement

*The whole intention of those trains was to get an early start, as soon as the grass greened up, and then get through the West as fast as possible. The Mormons were an exception, a special breed headed for sanctuary in the heart of the desert, a people with a uniquely cohesive social order and a theocratic discipline that made them better able to survive.*¹⁴²

Forty years after the wagon trains first rolled west, the City of Rocks had become a place of settlement as well as a place of transit. It was home to Mormon families that expanded the cordon of Mormon influence beyond the central cultural and political core of the Salt Lake Basin/Wasatch Range, to a Mormon "domain" that ultimately encompassed all of Utah and much of northern Arizona and southern Idaho.¹⁴³ Mormon President Brigham Young had not favored the Snake River plain, believing that "the farther north we go the less good characteristics are connected with the valleys."¹⁴⁴ Young feared the cold winters but most importantly, he feared the good grass - already claimed by Gentile cattle barons and certain to attract even more. Thus, in contrast to the church-directed expansion to Arizona and the Utah hinterlands, settlement of southern Idaho between Fort Hall and the Utah border was not a Church-directed exodus, but rather a search by the Mormon faithful for land and livelihood.¹⁴⁵ Thomas Edwards arrived first, working briefly as a cattlehand on the Sweetzer Brothers' Raft River Ranch and on the E.Y. Ranch; with tales of adequate water, abundant grass, abundant land, and winters less harsh than Brigham Young had feared, Edwards enticed Henry R. Cahoon, Myron B. Durfee, William Jones, and their families to the area. Thomas King and family followed soon afterwards; King had viewed the land as a teenager and was familiar

¹⁴¹ Hodgson, "Idaho Range Cattle Industry, Early Cattle Days in Idaho," pp. 11-14, 17.

¹⁴² Stegner, "Thoughts In A Dry Land," in *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs: Living and Writing in the West*, p. 69.

¹⁴³ S. George Ellsworth, "The Mormon Trail," *Pioneer Trails West*, Don Worcester, ed., (Caldwell Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1985), p. 167; Lowell C. Bennion, "Mormon Country a Century Ago: A Geographer's View," in *The Mormon People: Their Character and Traditions*, Thomas G. Alexander, ed., (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press [Charles Redd Monographs in Western History No. 10], 1980), p. 8; D.W. Meinig, "The Mormon Culture Region: Strategies and Patterns in the Geography of the American West, 1847-1964," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 55 (June 1965), pp. 201, 215-216.

¹⁴⁴ Brigham Young, quoted in Meinig, "Mormon Culture Region," p. 204.

¹⁴⁵ Meinig, "Mormon Culture Region," p. 207.

with its virtues. (Long-time Almo resident Etta Taylor would later term King's visit "the first known date of Almo.")¹⁴⁶ Charles Ward, informed of the area by friend William Jones, was similarly "pleased with the area's possibilities as a stock country." Mr. Ward "in turn persuaded Mr. John O. Lowe and David Ward ... [and] Mrs. Lowe persuaded Robert Wake" to join the burgeoning community of Mormons along the banks of Almo, Grape, and Edwards creeks.¹⁴⁷

A similar exodus, of friends and family, north from Utah, occurred throughout southern Idaho; by 1870, an estimated 3,000 Mormons were reported to live in a roughly defined area south of Fort Hall, Idaho, and north of Utah's Box Elder County.¹⁴⁸ This settlement was concentrated in the lowlands "along the streams and almost every important spring."¹⁴⁹

The first General Land Office surveys show only limited development within the immediate boundaries of what is now the City of Rocks National Reserve.¹⁵⁰ In his 1878 survey of the east half of Township 15S 24E, Allen Thompson noted only an unnamed road along the general route of the California Trail. He described the southern township as "gently rolling" with "second-rate [soil], good grass and scattered sage" while reserving the accolade "agricultural land" for the north half of the township near Circle Creek — land soon claimed by the city's first homestead resident, George Lunsford.¹⁵¹ Subsequent project-area surveys dated 1884, 1886, and 1892 note the "old California Road," roads over Lyman Pass "to Oakley," "from [the Emery] Canyon road to Junction Valley," and "to timber," as well as scattered corrals and scattered buildings, their placement without exception dictated by the presence of water.¹⁵²

Formal claim to the best of the public domain — along the water courses in the flat lands east of the City of Rocks — quickly followed the survey crews. By the mid-1880s, presumed-cultivable

¹⁴⁶ Taylor, "Some Historical Highlights of Almo and Raft River Valley," p. 3.

¹⁴⁷ Bernus Ward, "History of Almo, Idaho," seminar paper Utah State University, [ca. 1945], Utah State University Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

¹⁴⁸ Bennion, "Mormon Country a Century Ago: A Geographer's View," in *The Mormon People: Their Character and Traditions*, p. 12; Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 72.

¹⁴⁹ "Report of J. W. Powell and G. W. Ingalls," December 18, 1873, in *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 1873, H. Exec. Doc. 1, pt. 5, 43d Cong., 1st sess., 1873, Serial 1601, p. 411.

¹⁵⁰ For research purposes, this area is defined as Townships 15S 23E; 15S 24E; 16S 23E; 16S 24E, Boise Meridian.

¹⁵¹ United States Surveyor General's Office: 1878 partial survey of 15S 24E (Allen Thompson, surveyor) on file with Bureau of Land Management, Boise, Idaho.

¹⁵² United States Surveyor General's Office: 1884 survey of 15S 24E (J.R. Glover, surveyor); 1886 partial survey of 16S 24E (Oscar Sonnenkolb, surveyor); 1892 survey of 16S 23E (Frank Riblett, surveyor), all on file with Bureau of Land Management, Boise, Idaho.

and irrigable land had been claimed under the Homestead Act of 1862 and the Desert Land Act of 1877.¹⁵³

In 1862, Congress passed a land act that "breathed the spirit of the West, with its optimism, its courage, its generosity and its willingness to do hard work." The Homestead Act of 1862 promised 160 acres of public land to those heads of families, 21-years of age and older, who were, or who intended to become, American citizens. Only surveyed agricultural lands were available under the Act; however, throughout the unsurveyed West, including southeastern Idaho, farmers "squatted" on their intended farm, filing legal papers on the heels of the survey crews. Within six months of paying their \$10 filing fee, settlers were required to live on the land; thenceforth, they were required to inhabit the site, in a cabin no smaller than 12' x 16', for at least seven months of every year; the remaining five months could be spent off the land — and often were, as men and women returned to lower elevations, schools, and wage labor. After a minimum of five years of seasonal habitation (and a maximum of seven) and upon proof of cultivation, the United States of America conveyed legal title to the homesteader.¹⁵⁴

Arid western lands, void of timber and uncultivable without irrigation, could also be claimed under the Desert Land Act of 1877, amended in 1891. The 1877 act allowed claims of 640 reasonably-compact arid acres, at a cost of .25 per acre at the time of filing, and \$1 per acre three years later, at the time of final proof when, ostensibly, the land had been reclaimed. In practice, and in large part due to the "well-nigh impossib[ility]" of irrigating such large tracts, few claims were ever patented. General Land Office Commissioner McFarland "complained that the lands were being held for grazing without settlement and without costing more than the original 25 cents an acre paid when the application was made."¹⁵⁵ In 1891, Congress amended the act, requiring that detailed plans for irrigation systems be submitted and that \$1 per acre be spent in each of the first three years of development. This labor and money could be shared by communal ditch associations but could not be undertaken on behalf of others — whether corporate or individual.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ BLM, Tract Book Indexes, Townships 15S 23E, 15S 24E, 16S 23E, 16S 24E, on file with the BLM, Boise, Idaho. Not eager to advertize the arid nature of Idaho lands, Idaho legislators excluded Idaho from the Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909, only to request inclusion one year later, Paul Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development* (Washington, D.C.: Zneger Publishing Co., Inc., 1968), pp. 503-507.

¹⁵⁴ Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development*, p. 394.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 639.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

Of the numerous Desert Land Act claims filed on land encompassed within what is now the City of Rocks National Reserve, all but two were abandoned or relinquished.¹⁵⁷ The remainder most likely provided spring and summer pasture for the herds of those settled outside the city, in the Almo and Elba basins. Within these basins, mostly Mormon settlers cultivated land patented under both the Homestead and the Desert Land acts; they irrigated this land through the communal ditch systems that remain the Mormons' most remarkable contribution to the western landscape. One hundred and thirty years after the Saints' arrival, land in the Raft River Valley has been leveled, cleared of willows and sagebrush, and planted in alfalfa, grain, potatoes and beets. The creek and river beds run dry, drained by the orderly system of ditch networks.

Agricultural Development of the Lowland Valleys

*Most of the soil in the [Almo] valley is very fertile and especially adapted to raising lucern [alfalfa (English)]. But the scarcity of water prevents a dense population.*¹⁵⁸

In 1878, Henry R. Cahoon, his young wife Annie Durfee Cahoon, his father-in-law Myron B. Durfee, and Myron's large family settled along Almo Creek with the intention of farming. "Stockmen" told them and those who followed that they "could not grow anything here,"¹⁵⁹ that the "snow would bury [them]."¹⁶⁰ By 1882, 35 Mormon families had "proved to the contrary." Henry R. Cahoon boasted that:

Last year we raised about 5600 bushels of wheat, oats, and barley, 1500 bushels of potatoes of the best quality ... There is land here for a good many more settlers, and about 12 miles southwest of here is what is called Junction Valley; there is room for 20 or 30 families (so come along ye homeless).¹⁶¹

Church chronicler Andrew Jensen sounded a more cautious note: "If water was more plentiful in this valley, there would be land and all other facilities to sustain a large population."¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ BLM, Tract Book Indexes, Townships 15S 23E, 15S 24E, 16S 23E, 16S 24E on file with the BLM, Boise, Idaho.

¹⁵⁸ Andrew Jensen, compiler, "Almo Ward Descriptive," in *Almo Ward, Cassia East Stake, Historical Records and Minutes*.

¹⁵⁹ Henry R. Cahoon quoted in "Almo Ward History," in *Almo Ward, Cassia East Stake, Historical Records and Minutes*.

¹⁶⁰ Elihu Beecher, *A Pause for Reflection*, p. 223.

¹⁶¹ Cahoon quoted in "Almo Ward History," in *Almo Ward, Cassia East Stake, Historical Records and Minutes*.

¹⁶² Jensen, *Almo Ward, Cassia East Stake, Historical Records and Minutes*, emphasis added.

Land now encompassed by the City of Rocks National Reserve, sandwiched between the productive Almo Creek and the promising Junction Valley, is conspicuously absent in Cahoon's account — yet validated Jensen's warning; only limited pockets of land within what is now the reserve were claimed in the first wave of settlement.

In 1882, Iowa farmer George W. Lunsford claimed irrigable land along Circle Creek and the right to the water therein; in 1901 he sold his developed tract to William Tracy who developed the Circle Ranch on this and adjoining land. George Davis filed claim to the upstream tract ten years later. In 1901, Mary Ann Tracy claimed 160 "Desert" acres downstream from Lunsford's original claim, testifying that this land would not, "without artificial irrigation, produce an agricultural crop of any kind in amount reasonably remunerative ... the same is essentially dry and arid land." Construction of storage reservoirs along intermittent North and South Circle creeks ultimately allowed successful cultivation of oats, barley, and alfalfa; the remaining acreage was relegated to spring and summer range for the Tracys' cattle. Margaret Hansen also filed a Desert Land Act claim in 1909, irrigating her fields of alfalfa, wheat, and rye with water conveyed by reservoir and ditch from South Circle Creek. In a delayed conclusion to the first phase of area settlement, Eugene Durfee¹⁶³ patented 160 acres at the eastern gateway to the City of Rocks in 1919. This land was reportedly planted in water-intensive corn, beets, potatoes, and alfalfa suggesting that Durfee had constructed an irrigation system.¹⁶⁴

The big event was when the threshers came to thresh Dad's grain [ca. 1910]. It was a huge machine. It took about 8 teams to turn it. The teams were placed in a big circle with a man sitting in the middle to drive. He used a bull whip to pop them if they didn't pull evenly. It took 2 men on the stack to feed the machine, 2 men to catch the grain, and 2 men to hall [sic] the grain to the granary. Dave Durfee owned the thresher. He took his pay in grain. Neighbor helped neighbor. They worked from sun-up till sun-down. Mother had to have help to cook for the crew. ...

By 1909, the agricultural zone watered by Circle, Almo, Grape, Edwards, Cassia, Marsh, Basin and Circle creeks consisted of almost 12,000 acres of irrigated farmlands, surrounding the communities of Almo, Ward, Elba, Basin and Albion.¹⁶⁵ These lands supported primary crops of hay (native, timothy, or alfalfa) and grain (barley, oats, and wheat). The hay, barley, and oats provided winter feed for ranchers' sheep and cattle; sold to Hailey's Kelton-Boise stage company, the hay also served as an important cash crop. Wheat provided flour and a medium of exchange for "other necessities."

Fruit and vegetables were also successfully grown, primarily for home use due to limits to the transportation infrastructure. Potatoes were an exception — easily transported to the mining communities of Wood River (Hailey) and Boise Basin, they served as one of the few non-grain crops

¹⁶³ Durfee's first name is spelled "Eugean" in the final testimony of claimant files, however his family indicates that he preferred to spell his name "Eugene," the convention that is used throughout this document.

¹⁶⁴ Mary Ann Tracy patent file #567,7/1905, National Archives, Suitland, Maryland.

¹⁶⁵ McCoy, "Report for Forest Atlas, Minidoka National Forest Idaho-Utah," p. 1.

readily converted to cash. Pigs, chickens, and dairy cattle provided additional subsistence and additional assets with which to barter in the local economy: By the 1920s, cheese factories and creameries in Albion, Almo, Burley, Oakley, and Winnemucca, Nevada provided a market for milk and cream; longtime resident Jake Bruesch recalled in a 1974 interview that, circa 1920 "Albert Tracy brought in a herd of Wisconsin cows, Holstein cows, ... and a bunch of us bought 'em — five or ten or fifteen each ... and started to milk 'em and bought separators and separated milk and sold the cream for a good many years." By the 1940s, local resident Bernus Ward reported that, aside from those few ranchers with large cattle herds, "the chief income of the farmers here comes from their milch cows."¹⁶⁶

In his 1888 testimony for final patent of his homestead, George Lunsford claimed ownership of a wagon, a plow, a harrow, a shovel, a hoe, and little more. With these rudimentary tools, he had cleared and planted 20 acres in wheat, oats, barley and potatoes.¹⁶⁷ He most likely harvested this first oat and barley crop with a cradle or a horse-drawn dropper, and then gathered and bound the grain by hand; if he was lucky, he or a neighbor had a "self-rake reaper" to cut and rake the grain.

... I remember [a] ... time when Art and Fred had me straddle a neck yoke tied to the derrick cable. They played like I was a load of hay. They were the horses and would pull me to the top of the derrick and then let me down. It was fun to be up in the air 30 or 40 feet, just dangling. I felt like a bird. I was thoroughly enjoying it, laughing and yelling when Dad heard me and came to investigate. When he saw me at the top of the derrick he let out a yell. Fred and Art let go of the cable like a hot potato and headed for the top of the field where they were safe... I got the swat and was sent to the house. [Life Story of Bertha T. Kimber, n.d., City of Rocks National Reserve.]

By 1909, years after Lunsford had left the area, "two or three individuals" in Almo purchased horse-drawn binders; "during harvest season they went from farm to farm binding grain."¹⁶⁸ The threshing process followed a similar technological evolution:

The first threshing was done by the tramping of horses' feet. In a short time, however, the threshing machine was brought in. It was run by horse power and had belts to carry off the straw. It was not until the last two decades [ca. 1925-1945] that the "blower" was used to eliminate the straw. In the last three decades gasoline engines have replaced the horse power.¹⁶⁹ (Figure 10)

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 7; *Elba Ward, Cassia Stake, Historical Records and Minutes*, 1881-1904, Manuscript #LR2566 23, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah; B. Ward, "History of Almo," n.p.; Jake and Ida Bruesch, interviewed by A.W. Dawson, Oral History #180, p. 16.

¹⁶⁷ George Lunsford, Patent File #136, 11/1888, National Archives.

¹⁶⁸ B. Ward, "History of Almo," n.p.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. See also Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's Settlement south of Almo," p. 39; John Fairchild, "History of the Basin," 3/12/1935, reprinted in *The Oakley News*, 2/26/1968, p. 5; Ellen Sarah Ballingham Betteridge, interviewed by Verna Richardson, October 10, 1974, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, Fife Folklore Society, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, p. 6.



Figure 10. Horse-drawn Thresher (Idaho State Historical Society photograph #1274-C).

"The small threshing machine and tread power worked very well, after they learned to operate the outfit. They threshed from 100 to 150 bushels of grain in an eight hour day. Two gentle horses were trained to tread the power, each one was used a half day.

Four hands could easily operate this thresher--a bundle pitcher, the table feeder, grain measurer and straw pitcher. The children took care of all the work except the feeding, which the father or some older man did.

It worked so nicely that neighbors came to watch curiously first, then to help and beg to have their grain threshed." (Lind, "History of ...," p. 41.)

Residents harvested hay (native, alfalfa, or rye) — first by hand, then with reapers, finally with bull rakes. Cable (or "Mormon") hay derricks or beaver slides were used to stack the "hundreds of tons of hay" put up in the valley (Figures 11 and 12).¹⁷⁰

Agricultural Development of the City of Rocks - Dryland Farming

*Beginning about 1908, settlers by the hundreds flocked into the areas surrounding the Minidoka Forest homesteading anything which could possibly be considered tillable. ... Many settlers made a success of dry-farming for a few years due to very favorable rainfall conditions and good wheat prices. ... Then, beginning about 1920, years of normal or subnormal rainfall occurred and this, together with the abrupt drop in wheat prices in 1920 and 1921, finished the dry-farming boom. Hundreds of thousands of acres of land were abandoned.*¹⁷¹

*Without irrigation, the successful growing of crops [in Cassia County] generally has proved impossible.*¹⁷²

With the exception of Circle Creek bottomlands, City of Rocks lay beyond the fertile pale of the area creeks and protected valleys. Throughout the first wave of settlement, it remained public domain, utilized as upper-elevation spring and summer range by those farming the valley bottoms (Figure 13). The earliest settlers disdained this land as uncultivable; when the valley bottoms had been claimed (ca. 1900), Thomas King advised his eldest son to go to Alberta, Canada, where the land was "still new."¹⁷³ This view of the City changed dramatically with Idaho's inclusion in the 1909 Enlarged Homestead Act (June 17, 1910) and the arrival of the dryland farmers.

Cultivation of the arid lands west of the 100th meridian demanded crop varieties and farming methods foreign to emigrants from the well-watered fields of eastern America and northern Europe. Yet to the booster and the optimistic farmer, what the arid American West lacked in rainfall, it compensated for in abundant acreage available to the landless through a variety of public land laws. When the 160 acres allowable under the Homestead Act of 1862 proved insufficient for successful cultivation or stockraising in the arid West, the figure was adjusted to allow for claims of 320 cultivable acres — the Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909.

¹⁷⁰ Valison Tanner, interviewed by Verna Richardson, p. 7; Taylor, "Some Historical Highlights of Almo and Raft River Valley," pp. 12-13.

¹⁷¹ United States Forest Service, "The Minidoka National Forest," nd (ca. 1942), File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (1938-), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho, pp. 19-20.

¹⁷² Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology, *Bulletin #14*, p. 19.

¹⁷³ Henry Edger King, interviewed by A.W. and Lillian Davis, October 1972, tape on file at Cassia County Historical Society and Museum.



Figure 11. Hay derricks (Idaho State Historical Society photographs, #60-52.137-140).

The haying was done all by hand. It would be cut and then piled. They used what they call ... cable derricks. Then finally the grain was cut with reapers... it was a long time before they got anything like bull rakes or anything like that. (V. Tanner, interviewed by Verna Richardson, August 22, 1973.)



Figure 12. Beaver Slide (Idaho State Historical Society photograph #77-5.158).

This act inspired and sustained the dry-farm movement of the early twentieth century. By means of alternate cropping and fallowing, increased mulch, use of suitable grain strains, and modified plow methods, agricultural scientists believed (and tax-hungry western boosters proselytized) that non-irrigated lands receiving between 12 and 16 inches of rainfall per year could be made to yield profitable harvests. Agricultural Experiment Stations established on the plains circa 1905 "proved" the West's suitability to this farming method; the Enlarged Homestead Act simply provided the minimum acreage necessary for alternate cropping and fallowing, bringing overgrazed range land "into productivity in [a] new form."¹⁷⁴

The dry farm movement also corresponded roughly with passage of the Forest Homestead Act of June 11, 1906. Designed to combat hostility toward the creation of National Forests, the act allowed 160-acre homestead claims on National Forest land with "agricultural possibilities." Between 1906 and 1915, 18,000 western settlers claimed 1,900,000 acres under the Forest Homestead Act.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Alfred Atkinson, "Dry Farming Investigations in Montana," *Montana Agricultural College Experiment Station Bulletin No. 38*, Montana Agricultural College, Bozeman, Montana, p. 156.

¹⁷⁵ Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development*, p. 512.

Years of plentiful rainfall sustained both the crops and the optimism of the agricultural scientists and the settlers. "The government land [was] nearly all ... taken up, crops [were] sown and harvested, the once raw country [became] homelike, and the `smile that won't come off' [found] its place on the countenances of `dry land farmers.'" The project failed when drought hit the central plains circa 1918; at Oakley, annual precipitation fell from 16.07 inches in 1912 to 8.57 inches in 1919. By 1922, the U.S. Department of Agriculture warned that 320 acres were inadequate "except under the most favorable circumstances and expert management."¹⁷⁶

Of the 27 patented tracts within the City of Rocks National Reserve, 19 were dryland farms claimed between 1910 and 1919 — an era initiated by Idaho's inclusion in the Enlarged Homestead Act and terminated by the drought of the 1920s (Figure 14). The City's dryland farmers were joined by Charles Freckelton and Thomas Fairchild, who joined the rush for "anything that could be considered tillable" when they each claimed 160 acres under the Forest Homestead Act of 1906; their claims were only two of the eighty filed for Minidoka National Forest lands between 1908 and 1917.¹⁷⁷

By 1910, the Junction Valley school (southwest of the City of Rocks) "bulged [sic] with [new] students.... [Their parents] were going to dry farm. Already hundreds of acres had been plowed and plants. Roads were being fenced off. People would now have to drive on section lines."¹⁷⁸ By 1917, Junction Valley had become "a very industrious common wealth" with a store, a post office and two schools.¹⁷⁹

Virtually without exception, these Enlarged Homestead and Forest Homestead claims were marginal enterprises centered on marginal land foresworn by the first wave of settlers. Claimants described their land as rough, rocky, and mountainous. After being grubbed of sage and cleared of stone, acreage was most often planted in the traditional dryland crops of winter wheat, flax, or

¹⁷⁶ J. H. Johnson quoted in Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway, *The Musselshell Country*, Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway, Chicago, ca. 1912, p. 14; Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology, *Bulletin No. 6*, Geology and Water Resources of the Goose Creek Basin, Cassia County, Idaho, (Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho, Sept. 1931), 1923, p. 42; U.S. Department of Agriculture, quoted in Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development*, p. 507.

¹⁷⁷ Minidoka National Forest Personnel, "History of the Minidoka National Forest," p. 11.

¹⁷⁸ Lind, History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's settlement south of Almo, p. 74.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

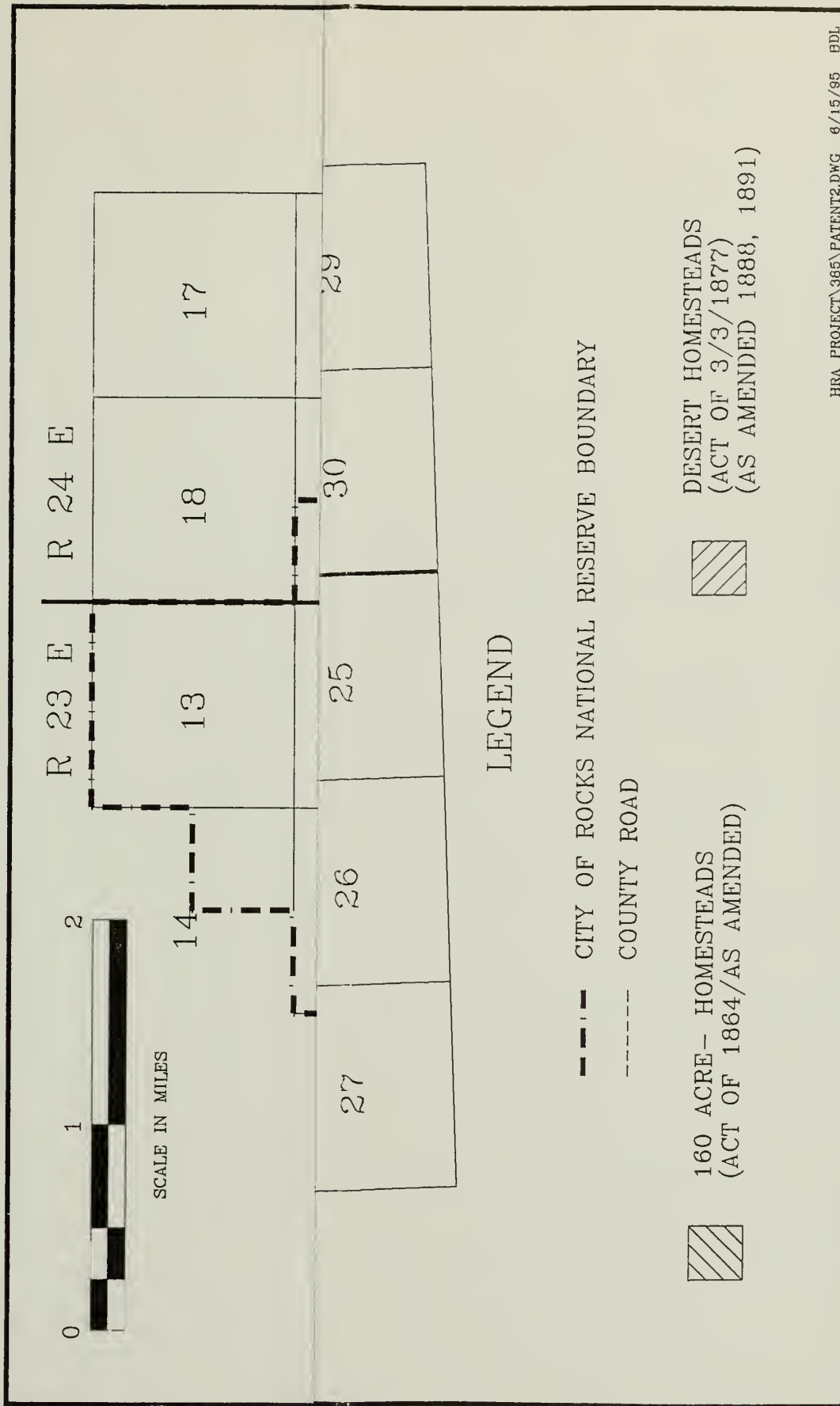


Figure 13. Pre-1910 Homestead and Desert Land claims within the City of Rocks National Reserve.



Figure 13. Pre-1910 Homestead and Desert Land claims within the City of Rocks National Reserve.

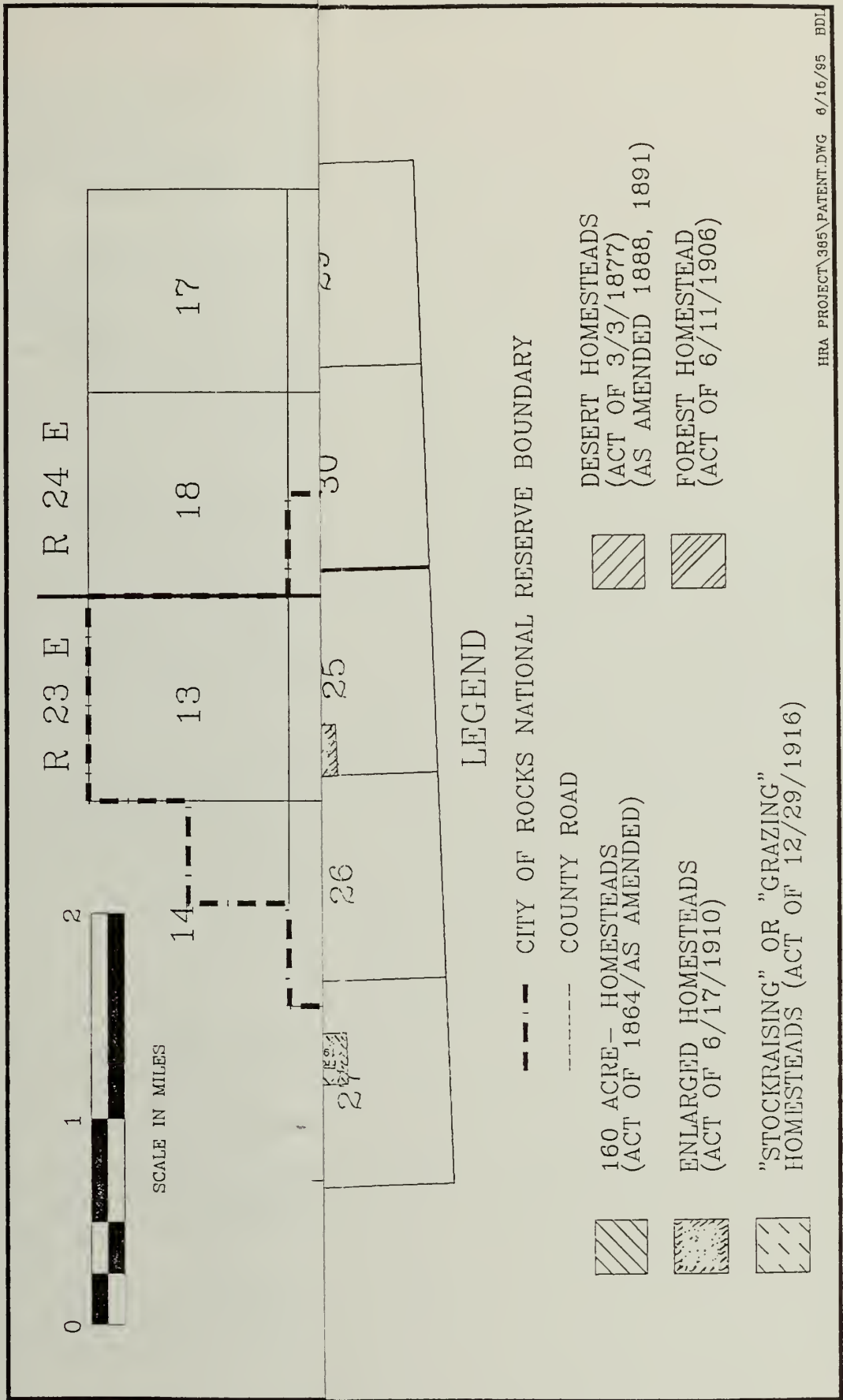


Figure 14. Patented Homestead Claims within the City of Rocks National Reserve, 1888-1929.

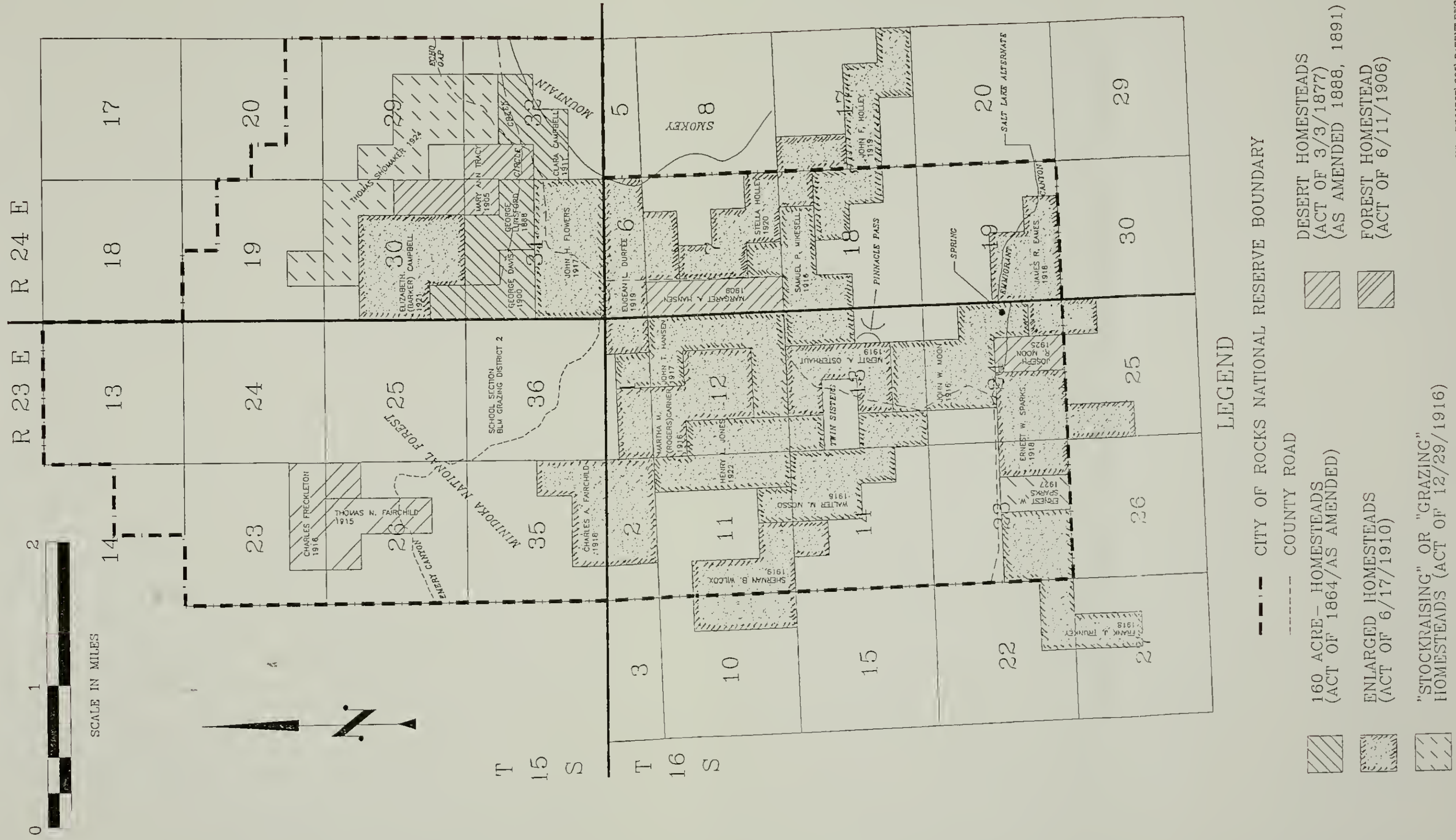


Figure 14. Patented Homestead Claims within the City of Rocks National Reserve, 1888-1929.

barley; these crops were supplemented with small spring-irrigated subsistence gardens and oat fields (Figure 15). Patent records for the City of Rocks indicate that planted acreage was small, rarely exceeding 100 acres and more often totaling less than 30. Yet much of the land not planted was fenced, thereby dramatically altering neighboring ranchers' access to what had been spring range.¹⁸⁰

Crops were tended and harvested between May and November, at which time the majority of area settlers reported that they returned to more-permanent homes in neighboring towns so that their children could attend school and they could seek wage employment. In their final testimony to the General Land Office, patentees repeated the litany: "I went each time to get money to go ahead each summer."¹⁸¹ Presumably, the chickens, pigs, milk cows, horses, and range stock followed, to the urban "barn yards" that historically characterized Mormon towns.¹⁸²

By any standard, the reserve would have been difficult to occupy during the winter months. Walter Mooso explained his predicament in a 1973 interview. For three difficult winters "we stayed there, right there, and I put up this rye hay." By winter four, Mooso moved his wife and two children "down every fall ... because the snow's awful deep and [not] too much feed there and I had no work only the trapping." In testimony to the difficulty of making a living from dryland farming, Mooso abandoned his homestead shortly after proving up, for a "good job" in the Burley sugar factory. His son Lyonal remembers "Dad left because it was pretty hard picking for him. I don't ever recall dad saying that it was any good."¹⁸³

Thomas Shomaker reported to General Land Office agents that "very bad brush and some rocks to be cleared m[ade] the cost of putting in cultivation around 11 dollars an acre including harrowing, leveling and other operations." From this toil, area dryland farmers hoped for "20-odd" bushels to the acre from the half of their already-limited acreage not left fallow.¹⁸⁴ Twenty-bushel yields, sufficient feed to winter limited stock, and a profit were occasionally realized through 1918,

¹⁸⁰ General Land Office patent files for the project area, National Archives, Suitland, Maryland, *passim*; Weldon, "Homesteaders at the City of Rocks," p. 1.

¹⁸¹ Charles Freckelton, Patent Files #573713, August 1916, National Archives.

¹⁸² Richard Francaviglia, *The Mormon Landscape*, (New York: ATM Press, 1978), p. 8. This seasonal habitation also conformed generally to Mormon settlement patterns wherein farmers and ranchers lived in community centers — near their church, their school, and their Mormon brethren — and traveled to their stock and cultivated fields (Francaviglia, *passim*).

¹⁸³ Walter Mooso interviewed by A.W. and Lillian Dawson, March 29, 1973, untranscribed tape on file at Cassia County Historical Society and Museum, Burley, Idaho; Lyonal Mooso, telephone interview with Ann Hubber, Historical Research Associates, February 1996.

¹⁸⁴ Delbert Hyrum Adams, interviewed by David E. Layton, 10/1959, Manuscript 6230, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah, p. 23.

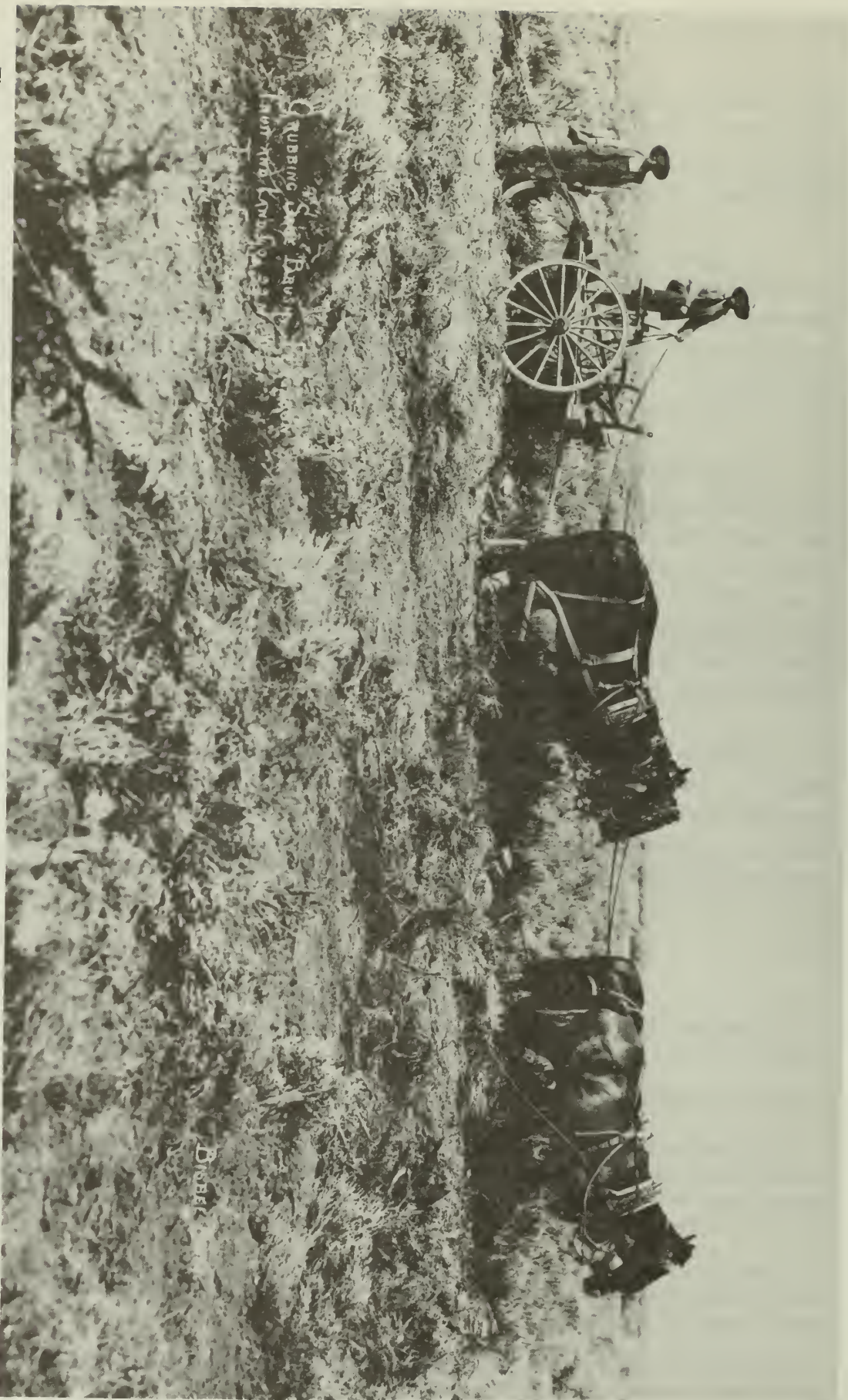


Figure 15. Sagegrubber (Idaho State Historical Society photograph #72-221.822/b).

First the trees and brush were cleared from a desirable spot This was a back tiring and tedious job. The brush had to be grubbed, piled and burned. The ground was plowed with hand plows pulled by horses. After plowing the ground was worked with hand made harrows... After the ground was harrowed it was leveled. The clods were broken and smoothed down. The remaining rocks were removed. The holes and ditches were filled with what was called a leveler. This was built simply of boards nailed together in a square. A heavy weight was placed on the top and it was pulled over the harrowed ground... The grain was then hand sown. (Ward, "History of Almo, Idaho," pp. 12-13.)

when annual rainfalls hovered near 13 inches and when wheat prices escalated in response to World War I shortages. By 1922, drought would reduce these yields to as little as two bushels per acre or to "failure."¹⁸⁵

Crops were also vulnerable to cyclical overpopulation of rabbits and ground squirrels: rodents took Thomas Fairchild's 12 acres of grain in 1913, John Flower's 40 acres of barley in 1914 and 1915, and James Eames' 20 acres of barley in 1915 and 1916. Those crops not devastated by the rodents or the heat of August were vulnerable to the occasional heavy frosts of September and heavy snows of October.¹⁸⁶

And drought affected the springs upon which City of Rocks residents relied for domestic water, subsistence gardens, and limited irrigation. Alta Mooso Weldon, daughter of homesteaders Walter and Helen Mooso, remembered that "suddenly, the underground water disappeared in 1920 ... One by one, ... settlers [Sparks, Moon, Osterhout, Wilcox, Mikesell and Mooso] abandoned their land, took their stock and household goods, moved out of the City of Rocks and took up new residences in Almo and down in Burley."¹⁸⁷

A little animal abounds in this region called the prairie squirrel. It is smaller than the common black squirrel, and gray in color. We see hundreds of them every day and they are often killed with clubs and whips. I first noticed them in the vicinity of Fort Laramie and have seen them every day since. [C.W. Smith, quoted (1850) in Howard Ross Cramer, "Hudspeth's Cutoff southeastern Idaho. a map and composite diary," 1969, p. 21.]

The drought — and the exodus — continued through the depression of the 1930s. Despite the promises of the land agents and the optimism of early settlers, land within the boundaries of the City of Rocks is once again valued primarily as uncultivated, unirrigated range land, as the functional and geographic extreme of a system of land use centered in the home ranches and Mormon communities of the irrigated lowland valleys. Despite the concentrated historic settlement, vestiges of agricultural endeavor and of habitation in the reserve are now limited to artifact scatters, foundation stone, and the faint outlines of differential land use.

"Desert Ranch: Have Faith in God and U.S. Reclamation."

[Handwritten sign in cover photograph, Sam Hanson et al. *Hard Times in Idaho Between the Great Wars*, Idaho State University Press, 1985.]

¹⁸⁵ Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology, *Bulletin No. 6*, p. 42; Adams, interviewed by David E. Layton, p. 23; Thomas Shomaker patent file #984529, July, 1926, National Archives.

¹⁸⁶ Patent Files (#678028, November, 1917); Eames, T. Fairchild, (#540318, August, 1815); Flowers, (#604482, April, 1917), all in National Archives; Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's settlement south of Almo," p. 98. Frederick Ottley recounted "heavy snow and wind" from October 1 until October 8 of 1882. J. Goldsborough Bruff awoke from his City of Rocks camp on August 29, 1849, to find the ends of his "very long" hair "froze to the ground, so that I had to pull it loose, but had to leave some, as a memento for the wolves to examine."

¹⁸⁷ Weldon, "Homesteaders at the City of Rocks," p. 1.

One has only to travel through the foothills or mountains of [this] country to discover abandoned homesteads. Sometimes there will be a cabin, its door ajar or missing. More often one finds only an orderly arrangement of flat rocks ... There may be a yellow rose bush, a few dead or dying fruit trees or a scattering of wild strawberry plants beside an almost dry creek bed where once a mountain stream overflowed.¹⁸⁸

These vestiges — rather than the sustainable enterprises — may well be the most important and compelling reminder of the homestead era in the semi-arid West. The vast majority of all Desert Land claims were never irrigated, cultivated, or permanently inhabited, but were instead used as range land. More than two-thirds of all dryland claims were relinquished before going to patent; half of the West's patented Enlarged Homestead claims were ultimately abandoned.¹⁸⁹

Within the City of Rocks, the list of relinquished claims dramatically exceeds the list of patented claims, with some parcels inhabited by three or more families before final proof was made or before the land reverted to the public domain or to the county;¹⁹⁰ presumably each claimant bequeathed at least minimal improvements to subsequent inhabitants, creating layers of cultural resources and of land use. Cassia Creek settlers Frederick, Hans, and Henry Ottley twice walked away from grubbed fields and shallow ditches; Tory Campbell abandoned a one-room frame house, 50 cleared acres, and 240 rods of fence on the eastern edge of the City of Rocks upon conceding that all but 60 acres of his 320-acre claim were "rocky and unfit for cultivation."¹⁹¹

On the patented claims, there is every evidence of construction, seasonal habitation, and cultivation — of substantial (albeit fleeting) settlement where residents could see the lights of their neighbors' farms, where houses, corrals, windmills, chicken coops, and fence lines dotted the landscape (Appendix B). The crumbling foundations and scatters of domestic debris are fitting reminders of this failed endeavor.

Stockraising

As a boy in the middle eighties I can well remember the heavy stands of grasses on the ranges ... and on these lands my father grazed stock which I helped to handle, and I have run stock on some of these lands ever since.

¹⁸⁸ Iona Gould, *A Pause for Reflection*, p. 618.

¹⁸⁹ Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development*, pp. 528, 638, 646. Many claimants never intended to settle, to stay, or to patent their claims, recognizing the limits of the land and using their parcels as three-to-five year options on cheap grazing land (their "cost" limited to the minimal filing fee). Physical improvements on these relinquished claims were minimal.

¹⁹⁰ BLM, Tract Book Indexes, Townships 15S 23E, 15S 24E, 16S 23E, 16S 24E.

¹⁹¹ Diary of Frederick Hugh Ottley, 1880-1952, Patent file of Elizabeth Campbell Barker [widow of Tory Campbell], (#820952, March, 1921), National Archives.

In a few years I watched these same ranges being fast depleted ... Even under these conditions the stockmen did not seem to realize that the ranges would be completely ruined but kept them way over stocked with sheep, cattle, and horses.... The higher mountain areas ... [were] practically the only watering places left open by the dry farmers and was little more than complete dust beds. ... About this time we heard the Government was establishing Forest Reserves and [was] going to regulate and control the grazing on these summer ranges, and this was done, but there was still too many stock for the range, and it took quite a few years to reduce the number where the range had a chance to improve. ... Where thousands of cattle and sheep were grazed in the early range days, and beef and mutton finished on the range, a small number now exists through a short summer period, must be placed in pasture in the early fall, and finished in feed yards for the market.¹⁹²

The City of Rocks' most consistent and economically successful usage has been as range land. In 1880, residents of the Marsh Basin (Albion), Elba, and Almo enumeration districts described themselves most often as ranchers. The economic success and the subsistence of these communities was in large part dependent upon cattle and sheep run on public land; agricultural endeavors were designed primarily to provide a family's subsistence and to sustain their herds during the winter months.

The droughts and winters of the 1880s and 1890s and the arrival of homesteaders within the watered valleys had ended the open-range cattle industry; neither, however, had dramatically affected stockmen's summer use of the non-cultivable, unsettled, high-elevation summer range, of which the City of Rocks was a part: "The range was considered free, with the only means of control by ownership or occupancy of the watering places."¹⁹³ Until the articulation and implementation of a national range conservation program, Snake River basin ranchers continued to overstock and overgraze this range, with little respect for growing seasons or carrying capacity. The circa 1890 arrival in force of sheepmen (many of them Mormon) to the basin heightened the conflict over increasingly rare and increasingly valuable range resources.

■ Range Wars

Sheep first challenged the supremacy of cattle in the City of Rocks region in the 1870s, when they were trailed in large numbers east from California, depleting the feed in a wide swath running through the Raft River Valley. Their numbers increased significantly in response to the winters of 1885 and 1889 — when cattlemen found that they could more cheaply restock with sheep — and as a result of Mormon settlement. Approximately 60 wool growers operated out of Oakley by 1882.

¹⁹² Mortenson, "History of the Range Lands of the Albion Mountain Division and the Surrounding Territory."

¹⁹³ Minidoka National Forest Personnel, "History of the Minidoka National Forest," p. 10.

By the late 1880s, sheep were rapidly replacing cattle in Cassia County, and by 1900 two million sheep grazed the Idaho range.

In the early '90's the sheepmen began to gain a foothold on the ranges, especially in the northwestern states...many long-headed cowmen in sheer self-defence turned their cattle into sheep ... the sheepman was much more able to cope with the elements than was the cattleman. He had his herd under his eye at all times, and could move it to better feed before the animals became too weak to travel. He also found out much earlier than did the cattleman that buying feed against a hard winter was money well invested.... In many ways the sheepmen profited by the bitter experience of the cattlemen.

Bitter range wars followed. All over the Rocky Mountain region the conflicts between the two interests have cost many lives, both human and animal.... Dead-lines were drawn by the cattlemen.... The sheepmen in turn swept across the ranges occupied by cattle, leaving a wide swath as clean of vegetation as if a fire had passed over it....

The sheep industry has gone on almost without a pause, until today it is too firmly entrenched in the West to be disturbed. [Will C. Barnes, *Western Grazing Grounds and Forest Ranges* (Chicago: Breeders Gazette, 1913), pp. 26-29.]

By 1905, 150,000 sheep grazed on land later defined as the Minidoka National Forest, most of these in the Cassia East Division surrounding Oakley, Idaho, just west of the City of Rocks; many of these bands used the City of Rocks region as late summer feed when the range within and west of the Goose Creek Valley had been exhausted.¹⁹⁴

To the south and west of the City of Rocks, sheep competed directly with cattle for available forage; their arrival did not go unchallenged. Oakley cattleman A. J. Tolman remembered that "everything was prosperous and peaceful until the sheepmen began encroaching

upon the grazing land in the mountains surrounding the valley."¹⁹⁵ Using their substantial political clout, cattlemen pushed passage of the "Two Mile Act" (1874), making it illegal, in specified counties, for sheep to be grazed or herded on the "possessory claims" of others or to be grazed within 2 miles of any dwelling. In 1883, the Idaho legislature — at the behest of both cattle barons and homesteaders — strengthened the 1874 act with passage of the Priority Rights Law, making it illegal to range sheep where cattle had been grazed.¹⁹⁶

Where these restrictions failed, violence often prevailed. Cattlemen defined a "deadline," south of Oakley and west of the City of Rocks at Lyman Pass. Oakley pioneer Newell Dayley remembered that

¹⁹⁴ Little, "A Historical Overview of Livestock Use in the Area of City of Rocks National Reserve," p. 17; Hodgson, "Idaho Range Cattle Industry, Early Cattle Days in Idaho," p. 13; Elmer Kimber, interviewed by Verna Richardson, p. 9.

¹⁹⁵ A. J. Tolman, quoted in Ariel Cranney, nd, Manuscript #13/1/6, Eli M. Obeler Special Collections, Idaho State University, Pocatello, Idaho.

¹⁹⁶ Little, "A Historical Overview of Livestock Use in the Area of City of Rocks National Reserve from Introduction to 1907," p. 20.

Any sheep or herder caught south of that line was treated quite rough.... Herders were whipped and beat shamefully. Camps were moved by a rope tied to the tongue of the wagon and dragged for some distance where they were tipped over and all contents destroyed.¹⁹⁷

Circa 1885, Mormon wool grower John Lind and his family constructed a home in Junction Valley, south of the Lyman Pass deadline. As Lind's family gathered for their evening meal the home burst into flames and was destroyed in a matter of minutes, leaving the family with their lives, a few belongings, and little shelter from the approaching winter. The family averred that the arsonist had been "paid by the cattlemen to commit this terrible crime to try and discourage the family's staying."¹⁹⁸

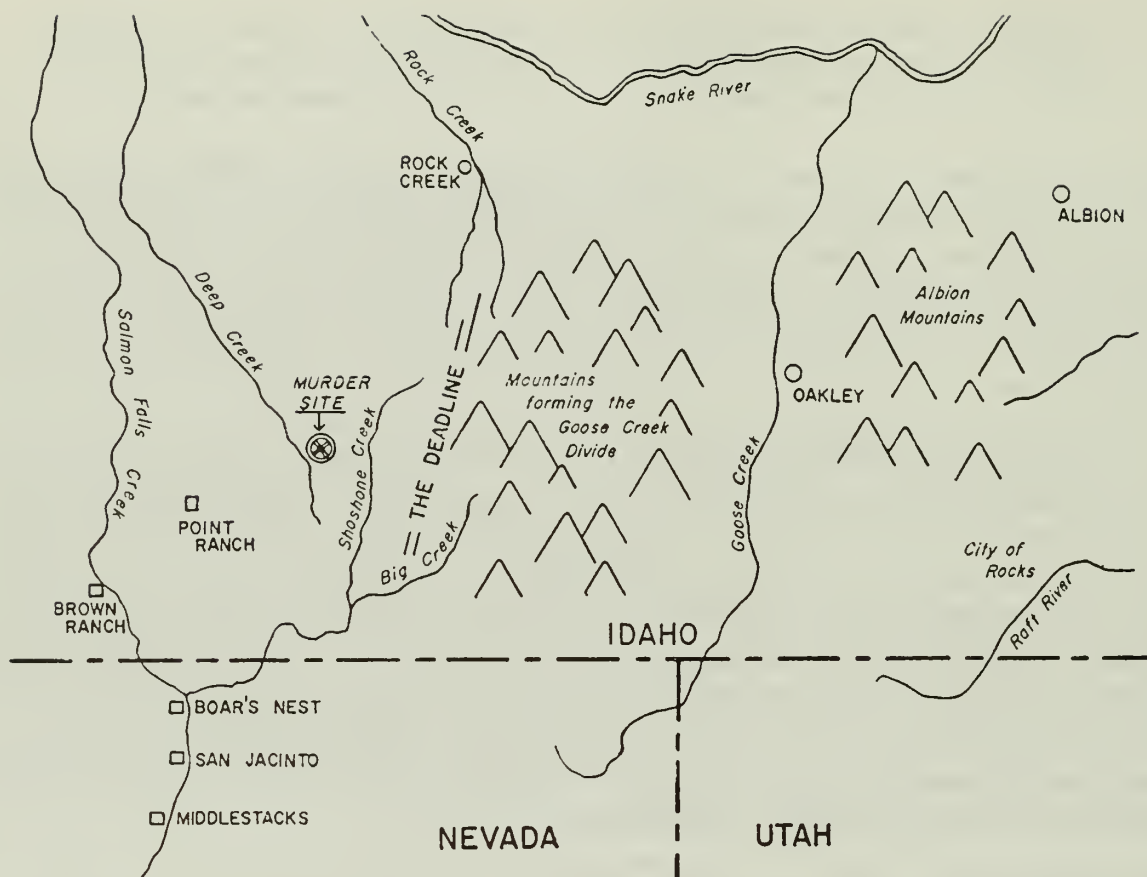
In 1886, Oakley cattleman Frank Bedke killed sheepherder Gabo Fango in a clash over the Two Mile Law; it took two trials, in front of all-white, mostly Mormon juries, to acquit the Gentile of murdering a black man. And, in one of the most dramatic battles in southern Idaho's range war, Oakley sheepmen (and Mormon brothers) John C. Wilson and Daniel C. Cummings were killed in 1896 on the cattlemen's side of a "deadline" running down a Cassia Range ridge (Figure 16). Jack "Diamondfield" Davis, hired by the Sparks-Harrell Cattle Company to patrol the line, was charged with their murders. After a 13-day trial held at the Cassia County Courthouse in Albion, a mostly Mormon jury found Davis guilty. The judge sentenced him to death by hanging. In 1902, after two stays of execution and six years in jail, Sparks-Harrell employees James Bower and Jeff Gray confessed to the murders and Davis was pardoned.

The Fango/Wilson/Cummings murders were isolated rangeland shootings in an age and place where such shootings were not uncommon. Historian David Grover argues, however, that the ensuing court battles assumed social and religious significance, as the focal point of a battle between the predominantly Mormon sheepmen and the predominantly non-Mormon cattlemen. The communities adjacent to the City of Rocks avoided the violence associated with the range wars — in part because residents were both Mormon and cattlemen (with social and spiritual incentive to keep the peace), and in part because the large-scale cattlemen were most concerned with the Cassia West division, west of Oakley and through which they drew their deadline. However, the cultural consideration — those unveiled undertones of a local Mormon-Gentile war — added an immediacy to the battle that transcended its geographic distance.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ Newell Dayley, quoted in Little, "A Historical Overview of Livestock Use in the Area of City of Rocks National Reserve," p. 21.

¹⁹⁸ Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's Settlement south of Almo," p. 40.

¹⁹⁹ Grover, *Diamondfield Jack. A Study in Frontier Justice*, p. 3; Little, "A Historical Overview of Livestock Use in the Area of City of Rocks National Reserve," p. 20.



The tri-state area which formed the setting for the Diamondfield Jack case.

Figure 16. Deadline (David Grover, *Diamondfield Jack, A Study in Frontier Justice*, (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1968), p. 14).

■ The Federal Presence

Unregulated range use came with an ecological as well as a human price; both the violence and the resource depletion inspired (with the rest of the West) a series of public land laws designed to conserve and perpetuate the range while allowing for economic viability: the 1897 creation of National Forest Reserves; the 1905 establishment of the United States Forest Service (USFS); the 1916 passage of the Stockraising Homestead Act; and the 1934 passage of the Taylor Grazing Act, which reversed the 1916 act and effectively ended the "free land" homestead era.

Following the census of 1890, the United States Census Bureau reported the passing of the American Frontier. Between 1860 and 1890, in what many critics called the "Great Barbeque," western lands and their abundant resources had been appropriated by corporate and individual

miners, loggers, stockmen, and farmers. The abundant resources and the ample opportunity for a nation's and a man's economic and spiritual rebirth (opportunity so long broadcast by western boosters) was said to remain only in isolated pockets. And these pockets no longer comprised a recognizable frontier, a physical and psychological line distinguishing an exhausted and exploited East from a virgin and bountiful West. America responded, in small part, with the Forest Reserve Act of 1891, an act designed to set apart and reserve forest *and* grazing lands for the public interest.²⁰⁰

In November of 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt signed the executive order creating the Raft River Forest Reserve; the western outskirts of the City of Rocks, and the forested slopes of Cache Peak and Mount Independence were included within this reserve and its successor, the Minidoka National Forest. Rangers of the Albion Mountain Division²⁰¹ of the forest (one of five divisions) were responsible not only for conservation of range and timber resources but also for inspiring a community of trust between the federal government and local residents, and for walking a fine line between the long-term needs of the community and the long term needs of the resource. This community was composed primarily of Albion, Almo, and Elba users; those from Moulton "did not use the forest" and those from Oakley ran their stock on the Cassia East and Cassia West divisions.²⁰²

Forest rangers reported that the immediate range needs in the first years of federal management were simple: reduce the length of the grazing season and the number of stock on the forest. And, from approximately 1905 until the height of the dry farm boom, pressure on area ranchers to reduce the size of their herds came from sources other than federal rangers: the rapid irrigation and settlement of the Snake River Basin — irrigation and settlement made possible by the completion of the federal Minidoka and Goose Creek reclamation projects — removed over 200,000 acres from use as winter range. The carrying capacity of this winter range determined the size of a viable herd; animal units carried by the summer range dropped accordingly, only to rise again with the arrival of the dry land farmers. These farmers settled, fenced, and plowed foothill land previously used as open range. They also solicited grazing land from the National Forest for their "few stock." In 1917, at the height of the dryland boom, grazing permits for the Albion Mountain Division had been issued to 145 local ranchers — 37 from Albion, 14 from Burley, 50 from Elba, 19 from Almo, 3 from Conant, and 21 from Oakley. Rangers noted with satisfaction that these ranchers were local

²⁰⁰ Samuel Trask Dana, *Forest and Range Policy* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1956), pp. 100-102.

²⁰¹ Originally called the Goose Creek Division.

²⁰² McCoy, "Report for Forest Atlas, Minidoka National Forest Idaho-Utah," p. 12; Untitled report re: "the matter of transferring the Supervisor's office of the Minidoka National Forest from ... Oakley to Burley, Idaho," 2/3/1917, File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (through 1923), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho.

and the stock run on the forest owned by "bona fide settlers" rather than transient corporate cattle interests.²⁰³

In 1923, the Albion Mountain Division ranger reported that while his unit had been carrying too many stock "in years past," the forest service had recently enjoyed success in negotiating and enforcing range protection reductions. Permits were issued for five years, and were reissued if all terms of range use had been met consistently. In a testimony to the stability of the community, "the turn over in permits [was] limited to ... about 4½ percent per year."²⁰⁴ Stock grazed on the national forest accounted for 70 percent of the cattle and 75 percent of the sheep run in the Almo-Elba, Albion, and Basin units; the forest lease permits were clearly essential to local ranching operations. The remaining animals were run on "outside range," primarily located in Junction Valley to the west and Middle Mountain to the east.²⁰⁵

By the mid-1920s, residual conflict between sheep and cattle men was in part alleviated by reserving 37 percent of the division as cattle range. The remaining 63 percent remained in "common use." The topography of the Albion Mountain Division formed the "natural" units of Albion, Elba-Basin, and Almo. Rangers opened the range to cattle from May 1 to October 31 and to sheep from June 16 to October 31. During the early spring, rangers most carefully walked the "fine line" between the needs of the community and the needs of the range:

²⁰³ McCoy, "Report for Forest Atlas, Minidoka National Forest Idaho-Utah," p. 8; Henry L. Smith [Goose Creek Division] Ranger, to W. M. Campbell, Supervisor, Minidoka National Forest, 2/18/1917, File: Records of Minidoka National Forest, through 1923, SO SNF; Minidoka National Forest Personnel, "History of the Minidoka National Forest," pp. 10-11.

²⁰⁴ United States Forest Service, "Range Appraisal Report, Albion Mountain Division, Minidoka National Forest, 1923," p. 7. In 1923, the Albion Mountain Division maintained 112 cattle permits, allowing an average of 38 animal units, and 7 sheep permits, at an average of 1,128 animal units. Although district rangers reported that "the division is terribly rocky in places and probably could be used to better advantage by sheep" such a transition was unlikely "because the people are not so inclined." This economic emphasis on cattle would continue.

²⁰⁵ Hodgson, "Idaho Range Cattle Industry, Early Cattle Days in Idaho," p. 20; United States Forest Service, "Range Appraisal Report, Albion Mountain Division, Minidoka National Forest, 1923," pp. 7, 13, 22-23, 26.

The establishment of an opening date which corresponds to the date the range is ready for grazing is complicated by the question of facilities for holding the cattle outside. Permittees, especially in Oakley and the Basin have extremely limited outside range and must get the cattle off their farms in order to start cultivation ... [Yet] owners are poorly fixed to take care of their stock for an extra period off the forest. ... Until such time as the stock men are capable of carrying a heavier load, the imposing of longer feeding periods or expense for range improvements by stockmen is neither practical or [sic] desirable.

It seems to resolve itself into playing a waiting game, and making for the present at least, the good of the range subordinate to the good of the industry.²⁰⁶

Rangers attempted to cultivate trust through creation of stock associations by which rangers and users worked together to establish salt plans, distribute stock, adjust the length of the grazing season and the number of permitted animals; by hiring rangers from the local communities; by giving lease priority to local residents and long-time users; by facilitating frequent contact between rangers and users; and by demonstrating, through careful recultivation of the range, that USFS policies were in the best long-term interests of the user. By 1929, the supervisor of the Minidoka National Forest was able to report "less grazing trespass, slightly fewer permittees, but with better dispositions and much less wrangling with forest officers."²⁰⁷

■ ***The Stockraising Homestead and Taylor Grazing Acts***

As the upper elevation range improved, the middle ground between the irrigable valleys and the forest boundaries remained vulnerable to overuse and grass depletion. Dryland farmers plowed the native sod and cultivated crops until forced by drought to abandon their claims; they left not only abandoned buildings and fence lines, but eroded land virtually void of the sage and native grasses that had once sustained area herds.

The Stockraising Homestead Act of 1916 was championed in part to correct this abuse. Its sponsor, Harvey B. Fergusson, condemned the "plowing up and destruction of the valuable native grasses" and advocated 640-acre units as an aid to "landless and homeless citizens" and as a means of "restor[ing] and promot[ing] the live-stock and meat-producing capacity of the semi-arid States."²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ Milo H. Deming, Grazing Assistant, "Albion Mountain Division," *Period Study Report, Minidoka National Forest*, 1923, File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (through 1923), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho, pp. 18, 21, 26.

²⁰⁷ R. D. Carver, Minidoka National Forest Supervisor, 1920-1923, quoted in Minidoka National Forest personnel, "The Minidoka National Forest," p. 18; USFS Intermountain District, "Alumni Bulletin 1929," Ogden, Utah, pp. 29-30, File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (1924-1938), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho.

²⁰⁸ Quoted in Gates, "History of Public Land Law Development, p. 515. The sheep and cattle industries voiced the loudest opposition to the Stockraising Homestead, arguing that 640 acres were insufficient to maintain an economic herd (continued...)

Only land "chiefly valuable for grazing and raising forage crops," could be claimed under the Stockraising Homestead Act. Yet by 1916 this classification applied to very little of the public domain: most had been claimed by land agents and dryland farmers. Will Barnes of the United States Forest Service, a vocal critic of the Stockraising Homestead Act, argued that what remained was "only suitable for grazing and producing nothing but Russian thistles and black alkali."²⁰⁹

The ranch is ... strung out in shoe-string form. The lower level land of the ... valley is irrigated... the main crop of the cattle ranch is hay. The crop second in importance is grain.... All the hay and straw and a part of the grain are fed to the cattle [an average of 1 ton of hay, per cow, for three months]. The long, narrow, fenced ranch, by enclosing the stream and stock water, controls the use of the adjoining open sage brush and foot hill range. The grazing permits on the National Forest assure good summer range. [United States Forest Service, "Range Appraisal Report, Albion Mountain Division, Minidoka National Forest, 1923," p. 16.]

Thomas Shomaker and Ernest Sparks patented the only Stockraising Homesteads within the City of Rocks, as adjuncts to previous homestead claims. Shomaker's discouraged testimony to General Land Office agents echoed Barnes' warning: "[the land] is rocky, brushy, gravelly, rough, mountainous [with] a few clumps of very small scrubby trees." The 595 acres not planted to forage crops supported a maximum herd of 30 cattle.²¹⁰

■ **Taylor Grazing Act**

By the 1930s, 50 million acres of western range land had been patented under the Enlarged Homestead and the Stockraising Homestead acts. Thirty-six million of these acres were ultimately abandoned, eleven million

"Typical Western Ranch"

In the Valley is the Farm, With Its Alfalfa Fields and the Homes.
The Foothills Above Furnish Water and Early Spring Range. The
Summer Range is Found Higher Up in the Mountains."
[Barnes, *Western Grazing Grounds and Forest Ranges*, p. 83.]

"acutely" depleted of grass and fertile soil.²¹¹ The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 reversed the Stockraising Homestead Act and effectively ended the homestead era by placing all remaining public land under the control of the United States Grazing Service (renamed the Bureau of Land Management [BLM] in 1946). The grazing service, working with those local users assigned to management committees, initiated a program remarkably similar to that initiated by the Forest Service almost thirty years earlier: they restricted public access of the land, controlled the number of

²⁰⁸(...continued)

(or to cultivate winter feed) and that the further breakup of western lands into patchwork claims would destroy the range (Gates, p. 517).

²⁰⁹ Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development*, p. 521.

²¹⁰ Ibid. Even this limited number of cattle may be high. Will Barnes warned that in much of Utah it took 50-60 acres to sustain 1 cattle unit; Thomas Shomaker, patent file #984529, July 1926, National Archives.

²¹¹ "The Western Ranges," *S. Doc.*, 74th Cong., 2d sess., 199, 1956, p. 13, cited in Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development*, p. 529, footnote [fn] 79.

cattle and sheep units allowed per acre, and monitored the opening and closing dates of the range. Circa 1950, the BLM also initiated a program to reseed the range with crested wheatgrass. This reseeding program provided "early spring and early summer forage ... reduced grazing on ranges that have suffered from improper seasonal intensity of use ... [and] shortened the period of winter feeding." It also underscored the extent to which native vegetation encountered by the American Indians and the first cattle ranchers had been altered by grazing, and the dryland farmers' plow.²¹²

While the local range has recovered substantially, the impact of the Taylor Grazing Act upon the agricultural community has been mixed:

... when the Taylor Grazing come in, why then you was limited to the amount of property that you owned, then you couldn't go out any further on the range and get anything like that, only just what your property there. Well there's nothing for them to go get. They stopped the homesteading so consequently, what could they do? Go in to town and go to work.²¹³

It [protected some of the range] but in other ways it didn't do so good because the young fellow today without even a range right has no way of starting. In my time you buy a cow, you could turn on the range ... I've been disgruntled about it a lot of times, but it does eliminate might over right ...²¹⁴

■ ***Growing Beef and Raising Wool***

Range improvements on land adjacent to and within the City of Rocks generally included branding, counting, and separating corrals (located near springs or pasturage), developed springs/stock ponds, trails, salt grounds, range fence, and wild horse catch corrals.²¹⁵

The pole catch corrals, one of which was located near Stable Rock within the City of Rocks, were constructed to catch the "ancient" wild horse bands that roamed through the City of Rocks: heirs of Bannock, Shoshone, and Emigrant stock. Bred with quarter horses, these animals "made real good cowboy horses." They also depleted valuable forage resources. Throughout the 1920s, Albion Mountain Division rangers reported "considerable trouble ... with wild and practically

²¹² A. C. Hull, Jr., Associate Forest Ecologist, *Regrassing Southern Idaho Range Lands*, Extension Bulletin No. 146 (University of Idaho, College of Agriculture Extension Division, 1944), p. 1.

²¹³ Tanner, interviewed by Verna Richardson, p. 35.

²¹⁴ Winfred Kimber, interviewed by Jay Haymond, October 16, 1973, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, Fife Folklore Society, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, Tape 1, p. 9.

²¹⁵ United States Forest Service, "Range Appraisal Report, Albion Mountain Division, Minidoka National Forest, 1923," pp. 20-28; Little, "Livestock Use in the Area of City of Rocks," pp. 10-11, 17, 19.

worthless range horses." In the fall of 1928, the United States Forest Service and permittees removed over 3000 wild horses from the forest and surrounding foothills.²¹⁶

Almo and Elba residents running cattle on the Minidoka National Forest between 1907 and 1918 included Henry Belnap; Chris Hansen; T. C. King; George Durfee; L. Hansen; A. & H. Jones; and William Tracy. In 1930-31, nine of the 23 men listed in the Almo Business Directory (Henry Belnap, J. J. Bruesch, E. D. Jones, J. D. Jones, William Jones, H. E. King, H. H. Taylor, John Ward, and Wallace Ward) identified themselves as "stockmen." Three men were dairy farmers, one a turkey farmer, and nine were employed in service industries. Only T. B. Ward professed a primary reliance upon sheep raising. Wool growers in the Elba vicinity were limited to the Ward Brothers, suggesting that raising cattle had retained its historic role as the area's economic mainstay.²¹⁷

Commercial Hereford herds dominated the region until at least the 1950s, when "some" began to experiment with new mixed breeds and when the raising of purebred registered stock gained momentum. Upon releasing their cattle to the unfenced forest allotments, cattlemen were required to "do a certain amount of riding to secure proper distribution of cattle" and, during the spring, to steer the animals away from the poisonous and prevalent larkspur — attractive to cattle in its tender spring phase. Melbert Taylor, who worked on the King and Eames ranch from the mid 1920s until 1940, remembered that he had to ride to the City of Rocks allotment at least once a week, to "push the cattle back" to their proper grazing grounds. Due to the rocky surface and steep slopes of much of the City of Rocks region, this riding was "difficult." Members of the local stock associations shared salting tasks and participated in the spring branding roundup. Despite this communal effort, ranching was hard work, year round. The winter of 1996, long-time rancher Jim Sheridan, age 78, recalled that his son "still lets me help out on the ranch; I still start each day with a flashlight and come in as it gets dark."²¹⁸

By the 1990s, 20 local permittees grazed an estimated 504 animal units on 6,122 acres of public land within the boundaries of the City of Rocks National Reserve. Livestock also grazed on 6,791 acres of privately owned land incorporated within the Reserve. Cattle drives were kept to a minimum: ranches were located close to the forest and "stock are turned out and drift pretty much to the forest.... Stock come home in the fall and stockmen need ride only as is necessary to pick up stragglers." Within the immediate City of Rocks, cattle trails extended from Bread Loaf and Bathtub Rocks up the canyons, to the higher elevation fall range, and down to the home ranches that

²¹⁶ Charles Twitchell, to Ann Hubber, Historical Research Associates, Inc., May 1995; R. D. Grover, quoted in Minidoka National Forest Personnel, "History of the Minidoka National Forest," p. 10.

²¹⁷ R. L. Polk and Company, *Polk's Idaho Gazetteer and Business Directory* (Salt Lake City: R. L. Polk and Company, 1930-31), p. 497.

²¹⁸ United States Forest Service, "Range Appraisal Report, Albion Mountain Division, Minidoka National Forest, 1923," pp. 11, 13; Jim Sheridan, telephone interview with Ann Hubber, Historical Research Associates, February 1996.

bordered the forest. Calves and "old cows" past their breeding years were trailed or trucked to local markets, or, beginning ca. 1960, sold to area feed lots. Breeding stock remained in the harvested pastures, where they were fed on that summer's hay crop.²¹⁹

Between 1910 and 1918, sheepmen from the City of Rocks region included Thomas King, W. B. Ward, W. M. Ward, J.C. Ward, A. C. and David Hubbard, James Durfee, Lorenzo Durfee, R. J. Eames, Chris Hanson, John C. Richards, C. A. Sheridan, Mary Stephens, Jas. Taylor, S. E. Taylor, and Wells Hadfield.²²⁰ These numbers had dropped substantially by the 1930s, when only the Wards identified themselves primarily as wool growers. Summer sheep trailing generally involved a two-person crew per band of 2000: one to herd, one to tend camp and travel between town and camp with supplies. Those who could afford to hired Basque or Chinese herders who spent the summers trailing the bands to forage, living in canvas-topped sheepwagons. For others, the job was a family affair, fulfilled by sons and inherited by daughters during the haying season when the men were occupied elsewhere. Sheepherders Peter and Dora Lind Johnston remembered that "they had no permanent home... Dora spent much of this time in the sheep camp, helping Pete with the sheep" and moving to town only when her three daughters reached school age.²²¹

A typical 1916 southern Idaho sheep operation was stocked with cross-bred Merino, Lincoln, Cotswolds, Hampshire, or Shropshire sheep bred for maximum production of both mutton and wool. Bands of ewes and their lambs utilized Minidoka and Sawtooth National Forest range from mid-June until mid-September when they were trailed back to the home ranch. Here they were shipped to market or bred with registered rams, moved to "fall range" in the harvested fields, and then (by mid-December) to winter feed yards. By 1916, in contrast to earlier years, "very few" depended on public domain for winter grazing. Ranchers fed their animals until the conclusion of the lambing season, approximately April 15. After lambing, the bands were run on spring range until the May and June shearing season. "Shortly after shearing, the move into the Forest beg[an]."²²²

²¹⁹ Anonymous, "Grazing," nd., File: Cattlemen and Grazing, 404.35, City of Rocks National Reserve; United States Forest Service, "Range Appraisal Report, Albion Mountain Division, Minidoka National Forest, 1923," pp. 20-28; Little, "Livestock Use in the Area of City of Rocks," p. 10; Jim Sheridan, telephone interview with Ann Hubber, Historical Research Associates, February, 1996; Melbert Taylor, telephone interview with Ann Hubber, Historical Research Associates, February 1996.

²²⁰ Idaho Wool Growers Association, *Idaho Wool Growers Directory*, (ca. 1915), Vertical File: Sheep, IHS; USFS, "Range Appraisal Report, Sublett, Black Pine and Raft River Divisions Comprising the Raft River Unit Minidoka National Forest," p. 30; B. Ward, "History of Almo," n.p.

²²¹ Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's Settlement south of Almo," pp. 59-60, 78; W. E. Johnston, Jr., with contributions by Mrs. Bernice Fisher, interviewed by Mrs. Robert Alexander and Mrs. Erwin Dobberpfuhl, 1970, Oral History #52, Idaho State Historical Society Library and Archives, Boise, Idaho (Copyright held by Idaho Historical Auxiliary); Hanson, "Depression Era Sheep Herder," *Hard Times in Idaho Between the Great Wars*, p. 67.

²²² Anonymous, "Part Three," *Sawtooth National Forest*, 1916, pp. 2-7, File: Supervision: old pasture and grazing authorizations," Sawtooth National Forest Supervisor's Office.

Shearing Sheep, ca. 1950

Verna Richardson: I wish you'd describe this sheep shearing process from the beginning to the end. What was the process in shearing those sheep? Who was involved?

Bertha McCuistion Kimber: Well, the process was to drive part of the band of sheep into the corral. Then they were separated by chutes, say, maybe thirty. The men would separate thirty sheep and drive them into a chute that was back of the platform where the shearers would shear their sheep.

Between the sheep and the shearers was a fence made of burlap bags. When the shearers had grabbed the sheep in the chute and pulled it out under his shearing machine, he would get the sheep in the position to shear. It was all electric. They used clippers on these sheep. When the sheep was sheared, he was put out toward the fence into a pen in the front of the sheds.

The fellow that was tying the fleeces would come and tie up that fleece into a bundle and take it and give it to the fellow that was loading them into the wool sack. That went on until it was time to eat. They'd have their dinner and go back and shear till night or if it rained they'd have to stop because they can't shear wet sheep.

The owner of the sheep would have his pot of paint. He would brand the sheep after they were sheared, before they were turned back into another herd that was sheared. They never mixed the sheared ones with the unsheared ones until they were all sheared off.

The wool was all sacked and stacked in an area until it could be hauled to the freight depot at Lucin to be put on the train.

We'd hire the men, the shearers, the corral men and all the wranglers, as they were called, the fleece tiers, the wool sackers. The sheepmen would have to hire extra herders to herd their sheared bands as well as their unsheared ones. They'd have to do that. We fed them.

When we first started, we didn't have the electricity there to run the plant so they used to have to have an engine generate the power. We'd have to hire that. Usually I think it was Ted Kimber, and he'd rig up an engine on a truck he had. That generated the power to run all these shearers' things with. [Bertha McCuistion Kimber, interviewed by Verna Richardson, October 5, 1974, pp. 28-29, Utah State Historical Society Grouse Creek Oral History Project, Fife Folklore Center, Utah State University, Logan, Utah.]

For all but the smallest operations, the tasks of shearing and of lambing were shared with hired itinerant crews: "the sheep shearing crews [would] ... start in California. There'd be a bunch of men, probably twenty of them, and then they'd just go from one outfit to another." These crews would have to be fed and housed, generally in sleeping tents. In the early years of the industry, sheep lambled on the open range: the costs of a high lamb mortality rate at least in part balanced by lower operating costs. By the 1910s, lambing crews (generally composed of Basque immigrants who had learned the trade in the sheep regions of their native Spain) operated out of large lambing sheds located on the home ranches.²²³

²²³ Colin McLeod, quoted in Tom Treick, "In View of New Laws, Labor Problems, Valley Sheep Grower Ponders Future of Shed Lambing, *Idaho Statesman*, (Boise), 3/7/1976, Vertical file: Sheep, Idaho Historical Society Library and Archives, Boise, p. 18-B.

Oakley sheepman W. E. Johnson reported that wool buyers from the east would travel west to inspect and purchase wool. Cassia County lambs were shipped east "to Omaha, Chicago, St. Joe, Kansas City."²²⁴

Large range bands roamed the Raft River and Snake River bottoms until the 1950s, when synthetic fabric and changes in Americans' culinary tastes reduced the market for wool and mutton and when an invasion of the Halogeton plant killed large numbers of Raft River sheep. In the immediate City of Rocks vicinity, Bernus Ward of Almo reported that "in the past ten years [ca. 1935] many farmers have purchased small ranch herds, but none [has] gone into the raising of [sheep] extensively."²²⁵ By 1979, "after less than a century of spirited activity," Idaho's range bands had "pretty much returned to the farm flock, except in the very sparsely settled areas."²²⁶

Building a Home: The City of Rocks Built Environment

*Their house was built of logs,
The ground they had for floors,
Of sod they built their chimneys
And sacks they had for doors.*²²⁷

■ Proving Up

Upon first making the momentous decision to stay and to stake a claim, nineteenth century settlers most often resided in wagon boxes or tents, reserving their first frantic construction efforts for the agricultural infrastructure central to economic survival. The most easily prepared cultivable land was quickly grubbed of sage, occasionally lined with a shallow ditch, plowed, seeded in a first crop, and protected from stock by one of three common fence styles: "buck"; three-strand wire; or single strand wire with a pole on top and "dancers" between aspen or juniper posts (Figure 17).

By mid-June, the first garden plot could safely be planted; that of Frederick Ottley was "fenced" in dry sage. All required artificial irrigation, most often supplied from the developed springs that also provided domestic water.

²²⁴ W. E. Johnson, Jr., interviewed by Mrs. Robert Alexander and Mrs. Erwin Dobberpfuhl, 1970.

²²⁵ B. Ward, "History of Almo," n.p.

²²⁶ Kenneth A. Dick, "Random Observations on Western Sheepraising in Years Past," Vertical File: Sheep, IHS, p. 12.

²²⁷ Bernice Cahoon Fries, *A Pause for Reflection*, Daughter of Utah Pioneers Cassia County Company, Virginia Estes, compiler, p. 209.



Figure 17. Juniper-post, barbed-wire fence at City of Rocks National Reserve (HRA 1995).

Winter sustenance for themselves and their stock thus tenuously assured, residents ventured to the timbered reaches of the Albion Mountains, along the north and east slopes of the narrow valleys draining Mount Independence and Graham Peak. Here they harvested full logs of white and yellow pine, for use in construction of homes and outbuildings. Aspen poles and contorted juniper logs served as fence posts and supports for the dirt roofs that most often covered pioneers' first homes. (The "road to timber" noted by GLO surveyors in the late 1880s remains visible through the City of Rocks. Those who arrived in the 1870s remembered that "there was no road into the hills at all, they had to drag their timber out to make their buildings and fences.")²²⁸

Long-time resident Etta Taylor described homes as generally consisting of only one room,

Proving Up

"Saturday, May 20, 1882: piled and burned sagebrush

Monday: piled and burned sagebrush

Tuesday: piled and burned sagebrush; began to dig a cellar

Wednesday: piled and burned sagebrush

Thursday: piled and burned sagebrush

Friday: brush burning continues

Sunday, June 4: Hans goes up the creek and hears of a better place up the canyon. I go hunting rabbits."

[Diary of Frederick Hugh Ottley, 1880-1952.]

²²⁸ C.E. Jensen, Forest Ranger, to the Forest Supervisor, Minidoka National Forest, November 27, 1940, File: 1938-, Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest.

Proving Up (continued)

In the spring of 1882, 17 year old Frederick Ottley and his older brothers Henry and Hans trailed stock from Union, Utah to the Goose Creek settlements of Oakley and Basin. Here, Hans and Henry searched for a homestead, abandoning two before filing claim to land along Cassia Creek, just north of the City of Rocks. Between May and the first heavy snow of October 1, Frederick grubbed sagebrush; dug a ditch; planted potatoes, oats, and a garden (fenced in the ubiquitous sage); chinked the log cabin with willow; constructed a chicken coop (plastered), a pig pen, a stockyard; hauled hay; and went fishing when he could. After spending October with the threshing crew "at the Barkers," Frederick returned to Union where he remained for the next three years.

Back on the claim in May of 1885, Frederick "helped Henry get some poles from Stinson Canyon and put up some fence"; worked at making a water ditch in Green Canyon"; and "snaked a log out of Pine hollow for a pig trough." October 21-24, after five weeks of traveling with the threshing machine, Frederick "chopped 32 house logs," suggesting expansion of the original dirt-roofed cabin.

In 1889, Frederick purchased the "Samuel Woods place at Elba." The daily litany of tasks ceases, replaced by a yearly summary of the year's precipitation and harvest:

1894: Water was plentiful — raised 690 bushels of grain and 44 bushels of timothy seed.

1895: This was a very dry year, very little snow in the mountains, and scarcely any rain in Spring or Summer. I raised 305 bushels of grain [less than half of the preceding year].

1896: Last winter was quite light in regard to the fall of snow, but after the crops were in very heavy rains came, I received some damage through the creek overflowing and washing through the grain patches.

Ottley survived the dry years and the floods. He died in 1952, a successful farmer in a community that he had pioneered 70 years earlier.

[Diary of Frederick Hugh Ottley, 1880-1952.]

"close built, daubed up with mud or clay, ... [with] few windows ... and usually but one door."²²⁹ John Lind's first cabin in Junction Valley was built of dovetailed hewn logs, chinked with clay and grass mortar. Small poles "fitted close together on top of heavy logs, and the tall grass and fine grasses to keep the dirt from falling through, completed a good dirt roof."²³⁰

The first windows of oiled paper were replaced with glass "when the first trip was made to Utah." The Thomas King family carefully fattened a litter of pigs all summer, loaded them in the wagon in the fall and proceeded south along the Kelton Stage Road to Salt Lake City. Here they attended the semi-annual gathering of the Mormon faithful, traded the pigs for window glass, and returned home.²³¹

²²⁹ Taylor, "Some Historical Highlights of Almo and Raft River Valley."

²³⁰ Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's Settlement south of Almo," p. 28; L. Mooso, telephone interview with Ann Hubber, Historical Research Associates, 1996.

²³¹ B. Ward, "History of Almo," n.p.; (Ted) King, interviewed by A. W. and Lillian Dawson, May 16, 1971.

As the size of the community increased, neighbors would hold "house-raising," and a home could be constructed in a matter of days.²³² Skilled carpenters were rare, occasionally called on for the more technical tasks of setting windows and doors "but outside of that, we built the rest of the house of our own initiative and know how. We built our barns and corrals. There wasn't much."²³³

[Log hewing] was a tedious, back breaking tiresome job especially the hewing, standing straddle of the log, bent over the broad axe in your hands hewing to a chalk line the entire length of the log.

[John Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's Settlement south of Almo," p. 37.]

The seasonal habitation practiced by many of the area's dryland farmers affected the built environment. In striking contrast to the tight-fitted, closely daubed winter residences described by Lind and Taylor, the seasonal home of Mrs. Angie Holley (widow of original claimant John Holley) was a

small 14'x18' rough hewed log cabin of one room with windows east and west and door to the east. The roof is of lumber, covered with dirt. The floor is laid with dressed 12 inch boards with some wide cracks between boards which permit drafts from the exterior. The base of the cabin, which is built upon logs set as posts in the ground, is not sealed with dirt or by other means."²³⁴

The "single boarded, 2 room, 14' x 22' box" inhabited by Thomas Fairchild, his wife, and their seven children was similarly unsuitable for winter use.²³⁵

A few of the dryland farmers did attempt to stay year-round on their upland claims. Walter Mooso spent three winters at his homestead at the southern base of the Twin Sisters. He lived in a "two-story," log house with a little room upstairs. This log dwelling replaced his first 10 x 12' board shack that had a [box]"car" roof.

Within the larger City of Rocks region, a progression of housing styles evidenced economic stability and Mormon adherence to Brigham Young's directive to build with brick and stone in symbolic testimony to the Saints' difference from and resilience to, the Gentile community. In Almo, brick and stone replaced the log and frame buildings initially constructed

Fencing was a slow process. "One post had to have four holes, bored with one and a quarter inch auger. The pine or aspen had to have one hole bored in its big end. Two posts were set in each post hole ... Posts were set one rod apart. A wooden peg was driven through the holes."

[Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's Settlement south of Almo," p. 63.]

²³² D. Ward, "History of Almo, Idaho," p. 10.

²³³ David James Cooke, interviewed by Verna Richardson, March 11, 1978, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, Fife Folklore Society, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, p. 6.

²³⁴ John Holley patent file, #737426, 8/1919, National Archives.

²³⁵ Thomas Fairchild patent file, #540318, 8/1915, National Archives.

by area settlers. In many cases locally manufactured brick was simply applied as a veneer to the log and frame buildings — thus achieving the desired appearance without incurring the expense of constructing a new building. Within the reserve, only the Tracys' Circle Creek Ranch achieved this level of stability with the completion of their stone ranch house.²³⁶

Interior furnishings were similarly sparse.

In 1888, City of Rocks resident George Lunsford furnished his 16' x 18' log house with "1 stove, two beds, 1 table and culinary utensils, [and a] sewing machine." In the "very early days" prior to the 1883 arrival of the Oregon Short Line to Burley, residents constructed their own "crude" furniture; freight charges for furniture were high,

and rocking chairs and bureaus "were almost forbidden luxuries." "Pewter and tin dishes" furnished the tables. In the absence of electricity (brought to the Raft River Valley in 1940), residents relied upon oil lamps, pitcher pumps, coal or wood stoves, and ice boxes. Those without ice boxes hung perishables on long ridge poles running along the north side of the house.²³⁷

Dad and Uncle Jim decided to make bricks for their new homes [ca. 1910]. In the Amminden field on the side hill was the site. They made the bricks out of mud, clay and straw. They had to have lots of water so they dug a well in the wash at the bottom of the side hill. It was Fred's and my job to turn the bricks every day. It seemed like there was a whole acre of them. [Life Story of Bertha T. Kimber, n.d., City of Rocks National Reserve.]

Patent files for claims within the boundaries of the City of Rocks National Reserve are primarily for small-scale dryland claims and reveal a remarkable similarity in agricultural infrastructure. Residents consistently constructed hen houses/chicken coops, pig pens, "carrels (corrals [?])," "hay carrels," miscellaneous sheds, cellars, developed springs, miles of fencing, and an occasional barn. The more prosperous irrigated and stock claims of George David, Mary Ann and William Tracy, George Lunsford (sold to William Tracy), Margaret and John Hansen, and Eugene Durfee also boasted stables, granaries, hay yards, and stockyards (see Appendix A). Like the homes, ranch infrastructure evolved as money, time, and manpower were made available: John Lind constructed his barn in 1894, ten years after initial settlement. A rock floor and piped water "came a little later."²³⁸

Rough-milled lumber needed for residential and agricultural development was supplied locally. As early as 1890 saw mills operated at various times on Howell Creek, Howell Canyon (later moved to Bennett Spring), Stines Canyon, Almo Canyon, Mill Creek, Cassia Creek, Pole

²³⁶ E. Kimber, interviewed by Verna Richardson, August 20 & 22, 1974, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, Fife Folklore Society, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, tape 1 (p. 10), tape 2 (p. 7); Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology, *Bulletin #14*, p. 160. Although Granite dominated the landscape at the City of Rocks it was "much shattered and weak" and unsuitable for use as building stone (*Bulletin #14*, p. 142).

²³⁷ Cottle, "Sketches of Malta and the Raft River Valley," p. 5; Tolman, quoted in Ariel Cranney, "History of the Early Settlement of Oakley Idaho"; Taylor, "Some Historical Highlights of Almo and Raft River Valley," p. 19; Fairchild, "History of the Basin," p. 5.

²³⁸ Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's Settlement south of Almo," p. 50.

Canyon, Rock Creek, Johnson Creek, and George Creek. These mills provided roughsawn lumber for siding and door and window frames, poles for fences, and shingles for roofs. All Minidoka timber products were "used locally for the development and maintenance of agriculture"; the vast majority of the 2,000 special-use permits issued on the Minidoka National Forest in 1917 — "the height of the dryfarm era" — were for small-scale timber harvests of posts and poles. Similarly, at least two brickyards existed in the vicinity of Almo, producing brick from local clay.²³⁹

■ *Irrigation Systems*

The Desert Land Act testimonies of Mary Ann Tracy (who owned Circle Creek Ranch with her husband William), of Margaret Hansen (whose land adjoined the holdings of her husband John Hansen), and of Joseph Moon provide limited descriptions of irrigation networks constructed within the boundaries of the City of Rocks National Reserve. The Circle Creek Ranch main ditches, drawing from reservoirs on Dry Canyon, North Circle, and South Circle creeks, averaged 1 foot deep and 1.5 feet wide. (The dimensions for two "smaller" lateral ditches are not provided.) (Figure 18).

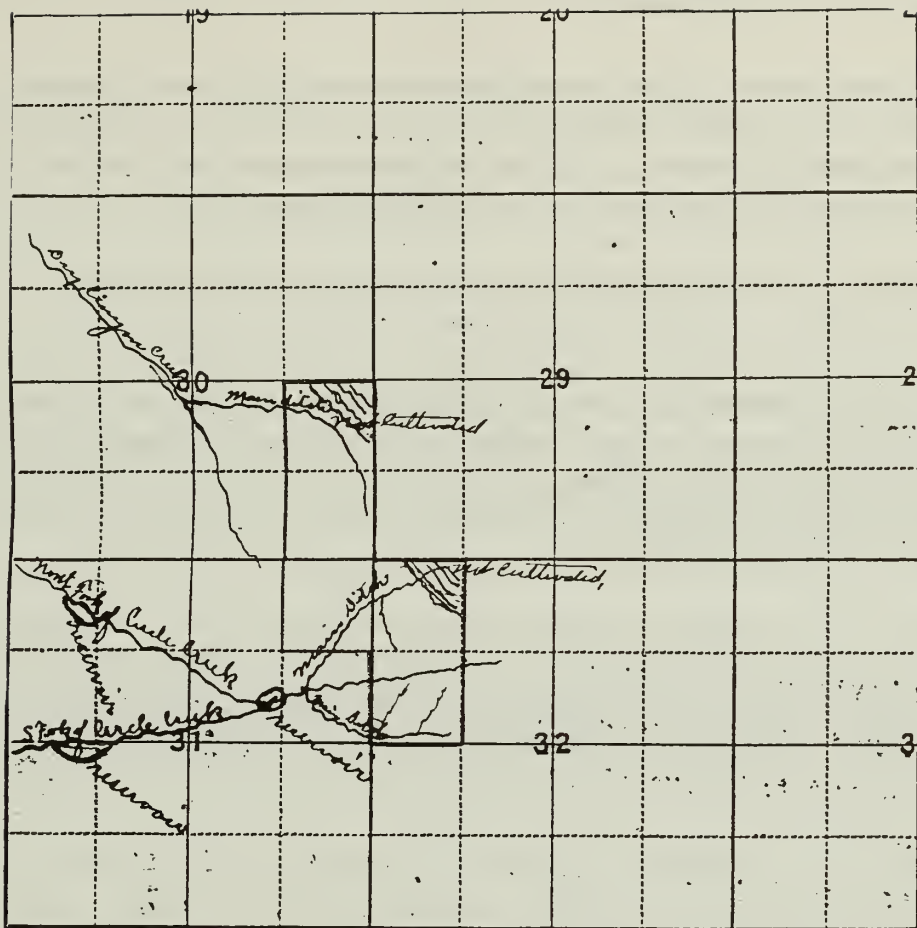
In 1909, Margaret Hansen proposed to construct a reservoir on the South Fork of Circle Creek, "300 feet long, 10 feet high, and backing water up about 150 feet." Main ditches from this water source were to be 1.5 feet deep and 2.5 feet wide, with a capacity of "about 200 inches." No evidence of either the reservoir or the ditches was found in the field, suggesting that the system was never constructed.

In 1925, Joseph Moon patented land encircling the Emigrant Canyon spring and containing the abandoned City of Rocks stagecoach station; his requisite irrigation network consisted of a stone dam below the spring, and a "trench" running from the reservoir out of a steep gully to a main ditch and two laterals.

Most often, limited irrigation water within the City of Rocks was drawn from the developed springs that also provided domestic water. At the Samuel and Emma Mikesell homestead, for example, a windmill powered the pump that fed not only the large garden, but the trees and roses that shaded the porch of the shepherd wagon that had been converted to their home.²⁴⁰

²³⁹ Merlin R. Stock, District Ranger, to Art Selin, 5/12/1970, File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (1938-), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest,; Untitled report re: "the matter of transferring the Supervisor's office of the Minidoka National Forest from ... Oakley to Burley, Idaho," 2/3/1917; United States Forest Service, "Range Appraisal Report, Albion Mountain Division, Minidoka National Forest, 1923," pp. 1, 18.

²⁴⁰ Anonymous, *A Pause for Reflection*, Daughter of Utah Pioneers Cassia County Company, Virginia Estes, compiler, p. 215; Diary of Frederick Hugh Ottley, 1880-1952; Weldon, "Homesteaders at the City of Rocks," p. 3.



6-735

I hereby certify that the above is a true & correct diagram of the land and water ditches reservoirs in said my desert entry

Figure 18. Ditch network associated with Circle Creek Ranch, Circle Creek Basin, City of Rocks, 1903 (Mary Mary Ann Tracy, "Final Proof," Desert Land Entry #567, National Archives, Suitland, Maryland).

■ *The Transportation Network*

The transportation network also reflected the evolving economic orientation of the area. Prior to passage of the Enlarged Homestead Act, roads within the City of Rocks generally followed the historic alignments of the overland trails and the various routes of the Kelton Road. Insubstantial secondary routes led "to timber" or served as cattle and sheep trails.²⁴¹

E.B. Dayley, who pioneered the Basin community, near the northwest corner of the City of Rocks National Reserve, informed forest ranger C.E. Jensen that, in 1881,

there were no roads at all, his job was to get ahead of the expedition with shovel and pick and locate crossings and start work on them until the rest caught up, then they would finish and he [would] proceed on ahead.... In this way the first routes of travel [to Albion and Rock Creek] were established.... Before that they had to go to Utah to get flour and the necessities they could not make."²⁴²

The condition of the California Trail between Almo and Junction Valley was so poor in the 1880s that custom threshing crews from Almo were unable to travel to John Lind's Junction Valley homestead. Improvements to this first road network were made by community road associations. In Almo, ca. 1880, "each man in the community was assessed three dollars, "to be paid in cash or labor."²⁴³

With the ca. 1910 settlement of Junction Valley and of the City of Rocks, these routes were improved, fenced, and reconstructed to follow section/claim lines. The intensive operation of Utah's Vipont Mine, 1918 to 1922, also resulted in significant improvements to the Birch Creek road, the primary haul road for Vipont ore.²⁴⁴ By 1920, the regional road network had achieved roughly its current configuration:

Oakley is joined to Burley ... by a graded and graveled highway. From Oakley a secondary road in fair condition leads southeastward across the Cassia City of Rocks. Another road extends directly east and across the Albion Range and descends to Elba.... From Albion a secondary road passes southward through Elba and Almo to the Cassia City of Rocks. ...

²⁴¹ United States Surveyor General's Office: 1884 survey of 15S 24E (J.R. Glover, surveyor); 1886 partial survey of 16S 24E (Oscar Sonnenkolb, surveyor); 1892 survey of 16S 23E (Frank Riblett, surveyor), all on file with Bureau of Land Management, Boise, Idaho.

²⁴² C.E. Jensen, Forest Ranger, to the Forest Supervisor, Minidoka National Forest, November 27, 1940, File: 1938-, Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest.

²⁴³ B. Ward, "History of Almo," n.p.

²⁴⁴ Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's Settlement south of Almo," p. 74; *Oakley Herald*, 12/1912, quoted in Booth, "History of the Latter-Day Saints of Oakley, Idaho," M.S. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1963, on file at Idaho State University, Boise, pp. 11, 44.

The basins and foothills of the ranges are nearly everywhere accessible, mostly on roads which are not maintained and seldom used except by sheep wagons.²⁴⁵

These were the days of the "9-foot standards" when the grades necessitated "supplemental pushing or leaving the car at the bottom of the hill."²⁴⁶ Not surprisingly, much of this road system was unusable during the winter months, including the road "across the Albion Range," and the Emery Canyon road connecting Oakley with the City of Rocks; Oakley residents were thus effectively isolated from the Raft River Valley for much of the year and those who resided on the "easterly side" of Goose Creek "transact[ed] all or the greater part of their business" in those communities east of the City of Rocks, primarily Burley and Albion, but including Almo, Elba, and Malta. (This reliance upon local trading centers was historically blunted, in part, by Mormon residents' semi-annual pilgrimages to Salt Lake City, in April and November, for the meetings of the faithful. Here they made their major purchases, and reinforced southern Idaho's cultural, religious, and economic ties to Utah. In modern times, the reliance upon local merchants for even day-to-day necessities and incidental purchases was lessened by "extensive use of the automobile" and improvements in the county road system, both of which facilitated buying trips to Burley, Twin Falls, and Boise.)²⁴⁷

Local residents, through the road associations, maintained as well as constructed these gravel roads. In the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps also assumed responsibility for the construction and reconstruction of approximately 50 miles of road within the boundaries of the Minidoka National Forest, including the Birch Creek road to the City of Rocks. Despite these improvements, as late as the 1950s, residents put their cars away in November, choosing the more "sure" conveyance of team and sleigh.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology, *Bulletin #14*, p. 22.

²⁴⁶ R. D. Carver, Minidoka National Forest Supervisor, 1920-1923, quoted in "The Minidoka National Forest" (ca. 1942), p. 22.

²⁴⁷ Vice President Oakley State Bank, Secretary Minidoka National Forest Wool Growers Association, Secretary Minidoka National [Forest] Cattle and Horse Growers Association to W. M. Campbell, Supervisor Minidoka National Forest, 2/16/1917, (USFS response penciled in margins), File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (through 1923), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho; Affidavit of Joe Belcher, to the Principal Clerk in the Forest Service Minidoka National Forest Idaho, 2/23/1917, File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (through 1923), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho; B. Ward, "History of Almo," n.p.; Stegner, *Mormon Country*, p.36.

²⁴⁸ Taylor, "Some Historical Highlights of Almo and Raft River Valley," p. 29; United States Forest Service, "Range Appraisal Report, Albion Mountain Division, Minidoka National Forest, 1923," p. 28; Ed Harris, interviewed by Verna Richardson, August 23, 1973, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, Fife Folklore Collection, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, p. 10.

Growth of a Stable Community

*The common bond? They were all church members and they were all poor.*²⁴⁹

Originally part of the Oakley Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), by 1887 the Albion, Elba, and Almo communities supported a sufficient Mormon population to be established as independent wards within the Box Elder Stake.²⁵⁰ By 1890, 40 of the 55 families in the Almo vicinity belonged to the Mormon Church. From this nucleus of LDS members grew a stable, homogeneous community, led by Raft River pioneers and Mormon elders Thomas King, Myron B. Durfee, Henry R. Cahoon, Charles Ward, James Lewis, and others.²⁵¹

The religious homogeneity reported by the church chronicler is supported in census records: the 1880 tally of the Almo enumeration district²⁵² shows concentrated settlement of Scandinavian and English immigrants, most recently from Utah. This settlement accords with larger Mormon demographic trends. In 1850, the vast majority of converts to the Mormon faith were from the American Midwest and Northeast. By 1880, fully half of those Mormons not born in Utah listed Scandinavia or the British Isles/Canada as their place of birth. These later emigrants initiated a dispersal from the core Mormon communities along the Wasatch Front to a Mormon domain that ultimately encompassed all of Utah and much of northern Arizona and southern Idaho.²⁵³

In Almo, Elba, and Albion in 1880, the numerous children were "at school," the women "at home," and the men most often identified themselves as stockmen, farmers, or (curiously) as emigrants. The agricultural orientation was to be expected; the formal occupation of "emigrant" may suggest nothing more than residents' recent arrival or may underscore their assumed responsibility to expand the range of Mormon influence.

²⁴⁹ E. Kimber, interviewed by Verna Richardson, August 20, 1974, p. 4.

²⁵⁰ Wards, the Mormon equivalent of Catholic parishes, form the social and religious center of Mormon communities. Wards are combined to form a stake (the rough equivalent of a Catholic diocese), headquartered at the most populated, central, or powerful ward community.

²⁵¹ Andrew Jensen, compiler, *Almo Ward, Cassia East Stake, Historical Records and Minutes, 1882-1971*, manuscript #LR10590 2, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah; Journal and letters of James Stapleton Lewis, pp. 2, 24.

²⁵² Enumeration districts define the system of population units used by the United States Bureau of the Census. These districts often conformed to school district boundaries, and were frequently changed to accommodate shifts in population centers. Enumeration districts can be an important indication of community boundaries. For example, in 1920 City of Rocks dryland farmers are included in the Moulton (Junction Valley) district rather than the Almo district.

²⁵³ Bennion, "Mormon Country a Century Ago: A Geographer's View," p. 8.

Albion, Almo, Elba, and Moulton (Junction Valley) census enumerations for 1900, 1910, and 1920 show little change in the pattern established in 1880. Utah and Idaho continued as the dominant birthplace of parents and grandparents, with ethnic ties linked most closely to England and Scandinavia. Farming and ranching remained the dominant economic activities, and the birthrate remained high. By 1920, the vast majority of minors listed Idaho as their place of birth, indicating that a stable community with few transient members had been established. Local tradition verifies the census: "pretty much they married their own folk here. ... Course some of them married away and left but not too many."²⁵⁴

By the turn of the century, Almo boasted a school, a post office (with mail every Thursday), and a store. Charles Heath and John Eames had formed a drama company and brass band (both of which traveled to surrounding towns). A Stake Welfare Farm met the needs of the newly arrived, the temporarily impoverished, and the widowed and orphaned. The three saloons "and other undesirable" remnants of the free-range cattle era had been "controlled" through creation of the Village Control Organization, composed entirely of church leaders. The Almo Water Company, established in 1889, controlled the domestic and irrigation water supply from Almo Creek: "each man who wanted water bought shares in the Company and was given water accordingly."²⁵⁵

The people had always provided a good time for themselves... Square dances, quadrilles, polkas, Virginia Reel two steps and waltzes were enjoyed... People came from all the surrounding communities to enjoy the fun. Young and old were included. The babies would be put to sleep on the benches while the oldsters danced far into the night.... Relief Society 17th of March socials were also great events. This was an all day celebration... The school was dismissed about 2:00 or 2:30 and the children came for their feast. Then they had a children's dance. Those were never to be forgotten good times. [Elbert Durfee, "Remembrances of Almo Community," n.p., n.d., on file at City of Rocks National Reserve.]

In 1920, the town supported 260 "souls," the majority of whom were described as farmers and stock raisers. The town contained "the finest meeting house in the Raft River Stake" (a brick replacement of the log meeting house constructed in 1880), a modern schoolhouse, Tracy and Eames General Mercantile, a hotel, a barber shop, "a small road-side inn," and a number of "fine brick residences."²⁵⁶

This was a Mormon town, platted on 40 acres of Myron B. Durfee's homestead, centered around the school and the ward house, showing a strong reliance upon brick construction (distinctive from the Gentiles and symbol of Mormons' resolve to stay and to prosper), and upon community organizations. Church records and patent files for those who homesteaded adjacent land within the City of Rocks suggest that the town was also designed around the Mormon principles of communal

²⁵⁴ V. Tanner, interviewed by Verna Richardson, August 22, 1973, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, p. 33.

²⁵⁵ Henry R. Cahoon quoted in Andrew Jensen, compiler, "Almo Ward History," nd, in *Almo Ward, Cassia East Stake, Historical Records and Minutes*, 1882-1971; Taylor, "Some Historical Highlights of Almo and Raft River Valley," pp. 26, 28; Elbert Lorenzo Durfee, "Almo Ward History," 1979, Manuscript #2735 372, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah; B. Ward, "History of Almo," n.p.

²⁵⁶ Jensen, compiler, *Almo Ward, Cassia East Stake, Historical Records and Minutes*, 1882-1971.

settlement: Mormons throughout the West consistently established primary homes in community centers, using adjacent land for cultivation but not for habitation. Wallace Stegner writes in *Mormon Country* that

The Mormon village is like a medieval village, a collection of farm houses in the midst of the cultivable land. It is a symbol of the group consciousness and the group planning that enabled the Saints to settle and break a country so barren.... In the period of settlement, and to a large extent still [1942], farmers did not live on their land.... The medieval town surrounded by its fields was a practical and sound pattern of settlement. A man could not by himself build and keep in repair a dam, miles of ditch, and all the laborious extras of irrigation farming. This was a country that could be broken only by the united efforts of all.²⁵⁷

Patent files and oral histories clearly establish that City of Rocks residents left their claims during the winter months to escape the snow and to secure schooling and wage labor. This pattern also held, at least through the 1910s, for inhabitants of Almo and Elba — "many" of whom moved to Burley and Albion for the winter "to take advantage of the social, and educational facilities at these places." When the family stayed behind, those teenage children attending high school often boarded in Burley or Oakley.²⁵⁸ Yet City of Rocks residents may also have resided outside what is now the reserve during the summer months, traveling daily to the rough cabins to work their fields and tend their stock, and returning to more permanent homes within the confines of their Mormon village. This settlement pattern differed significantly from that of the Gentile community, was at odds with the requirements of homestead legislation, and would have had a marked impact on the built environment. GLO agents reported that Stella Holley's homestead cabin was essentially uninhabitable and that she appeared to live "in town," traveling to her claim during the summer months to tend to her three-acre garden and to her limited stock. Local residents indicate that Eugene Durfee's claim within the reserve was used for summer pasture for his milk cows and that only the children lived there, while their parents remained at the family home in Almo, traveling to the claim only as needed. This pattern of habitation assured that the Mormon village "formed a center," and a stage for cooperative land use and social and religious interaction.

In contrast to Almo and the northern City of Rocks claims, church historian Andrew Jensen described the southern City of Rocks and Junction Valley communities (within the Moulton Ward)

²⁵⁷ Stegner, *Mormon Country*, pp. 29-30.

²⁵⁸ Henry L. Smith [Goose Creek Division] Ranger, to W. M. Campbell, Supervisor, Minidoka National Forest, 2/18/1917, File: Records of Minidoka National Forest, through 1923, Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Kimber, "Life Story of Bertha T. Kimber," p. 9.

as lacking a village "to form a center. ... All the inhabitants live in a scattered condition on their respective farms."²⁵⁹

■ "At Home"

From 1880 to 1910, census takers correctly defined women in the vicinity of City of Rocks as employed "at home." Not until 1920 is their official occupation denigrated to "none," an astonishing title for women charged with being "self-sustaining in all ... things, ... in our entertainment, in our food processing, in our sewing."²⁶⁰ Annie Durfee Cahoon moved to Almo as a bride in 1879 and had seven children by 1894. Her tasks included

washing on the board, ironing with irons heated on the wood stove, making soap, killing and taking care of all their own meat, the vegetable garden and the fruit trees, packing water and heating it on the stove — no electricity — besides cooking and cleaning and sewing and the other things mother has to do to look after a little family.²⁶¹

I graduated from the 8th grade in the new [Almo primary] school... I took the eighth grade twice because I didn't want to stay home. The folks did not want to let me go away from home and there was no high school in Almo... [In 1918] I coaxed [Dad] to let me go to high school at Oakley. He wasn't thrilled about it but he did let me go. Grace Thompson and I rented a room and batched together. We paid \$4 a month rent.
[Life Story of Bertha T. Kimber, n.d, City of Rocks National Reserve.]

Rhea Toyn of neighboring Grouse Creek remembers weaving carpets to cover the floors, making candles, mending shoes, and tanning leather. Women also served as midwives and nurses in a place where childbirth and disease were frequent, doctors scarce, medicine primitive, and roads slow.²⁶²

Minors were also at home. Census records for Almo, Elba, Albion, and Moulton (1900, 1910) consistently identify sons, over the age of 12, as "farm laborers" rather than as students; daughters' schooling was similarly brief. By 1920, the census reveal that children stayed in school until the age of 16 or 17; these schools, however,

²⁵⁹ Andrew Jensen, compiler, "Moulton Ward Descriptive," ca. 1920, in *Moulton (Lynn) Ward, Cassia Stake, Historical Records and Minutes*, Manuscript #LR5123 2, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.

²⁶⁰ Rhea Paskett Toyn, interviewed by Verna Richardson, October 21, 1973, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, pp. 8-9, 15.

²⁶¹ Anonymous, "Annie Durfee Cahoon 1860-1939," 1968, on file at the City of Rocks National Reserve, Almo, Idaho.

²⁶² Toyn, interviewed by Verna Richardson, October 21, 1973, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, pp. 8-9, 15; Weldon, "Homesteaders at the City of Rocks," p. 3. The Grouse Creek Oral History Collection, Fife Folklore Collection, Utah State University, Logan, Utah contains a remarkable volume of information regarding traditional medicines, death rituals, and the impact of disease on Great Basin communities, ca. 1880-ca. 1940.

closed for up to two weeks so that children could help with the harvest.²⁶³ Clifton Rooker, born in Albion in 1906, remembered that "money [was] always a problem [and] it was natural and necessary that everyone had to work as soon as they were able and could find a job that would make money." Clifton and his brother Harold gathered wool tufts left by bands of sheep as they were trailed under fences: "Some years we would gather impressive amounts which was [sic] then sold to a man with wool to market." In a process repeated by Plains children throughout the West, Clifton and Harold also gathered the tails of the ground squirrels that destroyed area crops. Once trapped, the tails were cured on area fences, and redeemed by the county at "some fraction of a cent." The summer of 1921, when Clifton was 13, he took a job on a neighboring farm. Here, for \$1 per day plus room and board, he milked the six or seven cows; fed the hogs, cows, horses, and chickens; cleaned the barn and stables; hoed and thinned the beets; irrigated the various crops; and moved and raked the hay.²⁶⁴

The economic contribution of women and children to their homes and communities was strengthened by the dearth of cash within the local economy: "we hardly knew what a dollar was, really."²⁶⁵ The products of their labor — eggs, butter, cheese, handiworks, soap, candles — and the crops that they helped to harvest, sustained the family.

■ *A Barter Economy*

From 1881 until the last year of record in 1904, members of the Elba Ward proffered butter, cheese, wheat, hay, script, oats, potatoes, bacon, and dimensional lumber to the church as their annual "fast offerings." Although cash tithes increased over the years, they remained a significant minority of all contributions.²⁶⁶ Children eagerly entered the general mercantile clutching surplus eggs rather than pennies, trading them for "a bit of candy."²⁶⁷ Adults traded potatoes or grain at the same mercantile, for those staples they could not grow themselves. Sheepmen, "passing through,"

²⁶³ U.S. Bureau of the Census, Almo and Elba enumeration district, Cassia County, *10th Census of Population*, 1900; *11th Census of Population*, 1910, National Archives Micro-film Laboratory; Martha Opedahl Soniville, "Farm Life During the Depression," in *Hard Times in Idaho Between the Great Wars*, p. 41.

²⁶⁴ Patent Files, Eames, T. Fairchild, Flower, National Archives, Suitland, Maryland; Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's Settlement south of Almo," p. 98; Clifton Aird Rooker, "Autobiography," [title assigned by HRA], manuscript #6887, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah, pp. 7-11.

²⁶⁵ Mary Hadfield Betteridge, interviewed by Verna Richardson, October 10, 1974, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, p. 23.

²⁶⁶ Jensen, compiler, *Elba Ward, Cassia Stake, Historical Records and Minutes*, 1881-1904.

²⁶⁷ Toyn, interviewed by Verna Richardson, October 21, 1973, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, p. 2.

carrying cash, and in need of both potatoes and flour, provided the merchant with the requisite legal tender.²⁶⁸

The barter system broke down at tax time, in years of poor harvest, and when making large purchases of equipment, stock, or land. Men then left their ranches and their homes in search of markets for their products or in search of wage employment.²⁶⁹

■ *Moonlighting*

With the exception of the few and requisite storekeepers, butchers, and blacksmiths who inhabited Raft River and Goose Creek communities, the vast majority of men (and widowed women) identified themselves as ranchers or farmers — a response not only to the available resources but also to the Mormon philosophy that "a poor man's best mine is in a potato patch."²⁷⁰ However, this agricultural emphasis disguises the extent to which City of Rocks residents "worked what work [they] could."²⁷¹

Men appear to have relied most consistently on mining and on freighting as a source of wage labor. In 1848, a Mormon battalion returning to Salt Lake City from the Mexican War, discovered mica (often an indicator of more valuable gold deposits) along the banks of Goose Creek; subsequent travelers prospected the area but no major strikes were made. Circa 1889, the Vipont brothers located the Vipont silver mine in northern Utah. The mine produced sporadically, under eastern capital, from 1890 until 1923, with a maximum employment of 250 men (1918-1923). During this

I started to milk cows when I was five years old. I could churn the butter but Dad washed and molded it, wrapped the pounds of butter in a heavy wax paper... The butter was sold to the Tracy Store or sometimes we took it to a store in Elba; about twice a week Dad sold milk to Mr. Lowe from Grape Creek, who came in his wagon to pick up the milk for his cheese factory... We would rush to open the gates for Mr. Lowe. He always gave us a nickel each to open gates... That was the only money we ever had with the exceptions of on the 4th and 24th [Pioneer Day] when we were given .25 cents to spend. We did not feel bad about not having money. We were just thrilled when we did get some...

After Margery was born [1912] Dad said, "Bertha is not going to milk any more cows. She is staying in to help her mother." ... I never had to go to the corral again. I'd much rather help mother in the house... On ironing days and wash days I had to do my share. I'd rather do most anything than milk those cows. [Life Story of Bertha T. Kimber, n.d., City of Rocks National Reserve.]

²⁶⁸ Ellen Sarah Ballingham Betteridge, interviewed by Verna Richardson, October 10, 1974, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, p. 6.

²⁶⁹ Taylor, "Some Historical Highlights of Almo and Raft River Valley," p. 17; Fairchild, "History of the Basin," p. 5.

²⁷⁰ Henry R. Cahoon quoted in Andrew Jensen, compiler, "Almo Ward History," in *Almo Ward, Cassia East Stake, Historical Records and Minutes*, 1882-1971.

²⁷¹ Toyn, interviewed by Verna Richardson, October 21, 1973, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, p. 19.

time the mine "supplied labor for those [Junction Valley residents] who needed work and a market for much of the produce raised."²⁷²

Mines within the more immediate project area were limited in number and in quality. The Melcher Mine near Elba and the Badger, Alice, Cummorah, and Jennie mines within Connor Canyon and Connor Flat (north of the City of Rocks) suffered from both insufficient ore and a poor transportation network and were thus not significant sources of employment or of revenue.²⁷³

Mica and silica outcroppings scattered across the City of Rocks attracted only sporadic interest, most notably during World War II, when the federal government subsidized mica production in an effort to meet its wartime supply needs. Despite prospecting within the City of Rocks, there is no evidence that "strategic mica" — hard, clear, flat, and free of mineral inclusions and cracks — was found in sufficient quantity to attract outside investment or to warrant substantial excavation. In 1950, only Latah, Adams, and Idaho counties boasted profitable or active mica mines. "Attempts were made to work prospects in other parts of Idaho but met with failure."²⁷⁴

Freighting also provided cash. After delivery of produce to market, residents would freight a return load in their otherwise-empty wagons.²⁷⁵ Clifton Rooker remembered that his family's 40-acre ranch near Albion

never quite produced enough to meet the family needs. As a result, Father usually had to obtain other work to supplement the meager income which came in from the few milk cows

²⁷² Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's Settlement south of Almo," p. 76; Dale R. Morgan, ed., *The Diary of James A. Pritchard, 1899*, p. 162, excerpt provided by City of Rocks National Reserve. Lind sold "flour, beef, hog, potatoes, cabbage, onions, carrots, [and] butter to mine workers during the years of early exploration. His son Nathan later worked at the mine, City of Rocks resident Nathaniel Rice cut timbers for the mine, under contract, and Basin resident Newell Dayley freighted supplies to and ore from the mine, ca. 1918-1923.

²⁷³ Ilene Fuqua, "Mine Car Still Waiting to be Dumped," *South Idaho Press*, Burley Idaho, 12/23/1969, File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (1938-), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho, p. 10.

²⁷⁴ Lind, "History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's Settlement South of Almo," p. 106; United States Geological Service, *Publication #229: Mica and Beryl Pegmatites in Idaho and Montana*, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1950), pp. 1-3; United States Department of the Interior, *Minerals Yearbook 1941*, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1943), p. 1465.

As late as 1978, Zon Lloyd, while selling the bulk of the old Mooso homestead, retained ownership of a forty acre knoll containing "quite an outcropping of silica and mica." He hoped that "mining of those minerals may someday be economically feasible ["Historical City of Rocks for Sale," *Times News* (Twin Falls), 5/16/1978, vertical file: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS, p. B-1].

²⁷⁵ Taylor, "Some Historical Highlights of Almo and Raft River Valley," p. 17.

that we had. He engaged in freight hauling for a number of years, hauling freight from Declo, the nearest rail point, to the Melcher Mine.²⁷⁶

Between June and September of 1889 and 1890 (in the narrow gap between planting and harvest), Frederick Ottley worked for Ed Conant, driving the stage between Kelton and Albion.²⁷⁷

Men also hired on for construction of the Oakley Dam, a Bureau of Reclamation/Carey Act project (1909-1911) or the Bureau of Reclamation's Minidoka Project at Rupert, working construction, or as "ditch riders." Others took jobs in the sugar-beet factories, or traveled from ranch to ranch, shearing sheep, threshing grain, or putting up hay. Walter Mooso and Lee Nelson ran a winter trap line "in and around the City of Rocks," making a "fair living" selling lynx, bobcat, coyote, wolf, and badger hides. Indeed, Mooso stated that he could make more money in six days of trapping than in an entire summer of dryland farming; his son verified: "if it wasn't for his trapping he would have had one tough time making it."²⁷⁸ Bertha Taylor Kimber also remembered that her father and Billy Cahoon "trapped animals in the winter to add to the family funds. They trapped many coyotes, muskrats, badgers, skunks, mountain lions and weasels." Others sold deer hides to the Fort Hall Indians who used the leather to make beaded buckskin gloves; Ida Bruesch recalled that "the people depended on that for a good deal of their living."²⁷⁹

Rhea Paskett Toyn does not know how she and her husband Archie made ends meet, only that they did "somehow." Others were less successful. As the drought hit in 1920, Cheney Vao Leroy's parents "lost or somehow were unable to keep" their Albion farm and moved to California.²⁸⁰ In recommending final approval of Thomas Fairchild's marginal claim, forest ranger T. C. Clabby noted, "[The claimant] had no means to work with when he took up the claim and it is plain to see he has not accumulated anything since."²⁸¹ When the two-room log house of City of Rocks rancher Merritt A. Osterhout, his wife, and three children, burned in September of 1915, Osterhout

²⁷⁶ Rooker, "Autobiography," p. 6.

²⁷⁷ Diary of Frederick Hugh Ottley, 1880-1865.

²⁷⁸ W. Mooso, interviewed by A.W. and Lillian Dawson, March 29, 1973. Tape on file at Cassia County Historical Society and Museum, Burley, Idaho.

²⁷⁹ Personal history of Cheney Vao Leroy, 1915-1991, manuscript #12988, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah, p. 1; Toyn, interviewed by Verna Richardson, October 21, 1973, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, p. 19; Weldon, "Homesteaders at the City of Rocks," pp. 1-2; Kimber, "Life Story of Bertha T. Kimber," p. 9; "Jake and Ida Bruesch, interviewed by A. W. Dawson, May 16, 1974.

²⁸⁰ Personal history of Cheney Vao Leroy, 1915-1991, p. 2.

²⁸¹ T. C. Clabby, "Confidential Report Submitted at the Request of the Register of the U. S. General Land Office, Hailey, Idaho," July 27, 1915, in patent file of Thomas Fairchild, National Archives.

did not have the means to rebuild, and left for the winter, going to Burley Flat, where he expected to be able to earn sufficient [wages] to enable him to rebuild the following spring, but found himself unable to do so, and as his crop of 1915 amounted to only 260 bushels, it was insufficient for the support of himself and family, and made it imperative for him to be absent to earn a living elsewhere and impossible to go back to the land in the spring of 1916.²⁸²

Assured of Osterhout's "good intentions," the General Land Office granted title to the land in January of 1918. Less than ten years later the land was abandoned.²⁸³

Most of the people still living here were not too much effected by the depression at first, for they had been pretty much self-sustaining. They produced much of their own food and fashioned their clothing themselves. A yearly trip to Ogden for fruit to preserve and needed material not produced here was all they were used to. However when drought struck it was a hardship. [Elbert Durfee, "Remembrances of Almo Community," n.p., n.d., on file at City of Rocks National Reserve].

For western farmers, the Great Depression of 1929 had begun a decade earlier, with the end of World War I, the end of inflated wheat prices, and the end of above-average rainfall. In 1925, instead of collecting grazing fees in advance, Minidoka rangers "took the stockman's [promissory] notes."²⁸⁴ During the 1930s, the volume of timber taken from the Minidoka National Forest under free-use permit almost dou-

bled, "due very likely to economic conditions causing many families to use wood for fuel in place of coal."²⁸⁵

Almo's population dropped from 260 in 1920 to 245 in 1930; this drop was particularly significant given the high birthrate within the Mormon community.²⁸⁶ The Moulton Ward, encompassing Junction Valley and much of the City of Rocks, fell from approximately 100 inhabitants in 1920 to 64 in 1930. These numbers continued to decline over the next four decades as range rights and homestead options became more limited for the children of the founding families:

²⁸² *Claude C. Harris v. Meritt A. Osterhout*, Contest No. 1491, July 6, 1917, in Meritt A. Osterhout patent file, #671971, 1/1918, National Archives.

²⁸³ Weldon, "Homesteaders at the City of Rocks," p. 1.

²⁸⁴ Carver, Minidoka National Forest Supervisor, 1920-1923, quoted in "The Minidoka National Forest," p. 22.

²⁸⁵ Minidoka National Forest personnel, "History of the Minidoka National Forest," p. 15.

²⁸⁶ Jensen, compiler, *Almo Ward, Cassia East Stake, Historical Records and Minutes*, 1882-1971.

There's no way to provide for these boys. ... They can't go into the stock business in this country. There's no ground for sale. Everything seems to be tied up ... Generally a man, most of them had big families. One boy probably could have took over, but what about the rest?²⁸⁷

Elba resident Charles Twitchell echoes: "There were six of us boys. Some of us had to move on."²⁸⁸

Conservation and Recreation

*Another resource not yet utilized is the scenic attraction of the "Cassia City of Rocks." This unique area is surely worthy of development and deserves recognition as a National Monument.*²⁸⁹

For Charles Brown, publisher of the *Oakley Herald* and president of the Oakley Chamber of Commerce, economic recovery (if not salvation) lay in creation of a National Monument at City of Rocks and in harvest of the area's tourist potential. Recreational use of the area was not new: since settlement, the region had served "as a favorite picnic spot of southern Idaho residents" and a frequent "field-trip" destination for area school children.²⁹⁰

Yet there was little economic benefit in local use and in 1926 Brown initiated a concerted publicity campaign aimed at gaining the attention of the traveling public, of local congressional leaders, and of those who controlled the county's road maintenance and construction coffers. Brown was joined in his efforts by geologist Alfred L. Anderson, who frequently worked for the Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology, by state politician Byron Defenbach who prepared an Idaho Trails and Landmarks Association plan, and by Idaho Senator James P. Pope, who presented Defenbach's plan to Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal congress.

Their publicity campaign included frequent editorials; pictorials; pages of testimonial from geologists, historians, and local and regional dignitaries; bathing beauty contests held at Bathtub Rock; and annual prizes to the best paper presenting a topic of local history. (The 1938 winner "recreated" a version of the Battle of Almo Creek in gruesome detail.)²⁹¹

²⁸⁷ V. Tanner, interviewed by Verna Richardson, August 22, 1973, Grouse Creek Cultural Survey, pp. 33-34.

²⁸⁸ Twitchell interview with A. Hubber, May 1995.

²⁸⁹ Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology, *Bulletin #14*, p. ix.

²⁹⁰ Taylor, "Some Historical Highlights of Almo and Raft River Valley," p. 17; *A Pause for Reflection*, Virginia Estes compiler, p. 71.

²⁹¹ Vertical File: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS, passim.

Aesthetically, Brown and others compared the City of Rocks to Utah's Zion Canyon and Colorado's Garden of the Gods. Geologically, Anderson offered oft-repeated testimonial to the uniqueness of "such a complete assemblage of bizarre and fantastic forms within an area of two or three square miles." Historically, the City was lauded as being "rich in the history and legend of the Old West," a place of Indian Massacre and Stagecoach Holdup.²⁹²

By 1938, Brown's proposal to create a National Monument at City of Rocks had been "indorsed by every member of Idaho's congressional delegation; by Governor Clark; by the Oakley and Twin Falls chambers of commerce; by such influential daily newspapers as the *Twin Falls News*, the *Idaho Evening Times*, the *Boise Statesman*, and the *Salt Lake Tribune*; by many of the weekly papers published in the West; and by organizations and individuals and publications throughout America" (many of whom were members of Brown's "Advisory Council Advocating [a] National Monument at City of Rocks"). In October of 1938, Brown organized a tour of the City; participating dignitaries included Clark, Pope, Anderson, future U.S. Senator Henry Dworshak of Burley, E.C. Munson (Union Pacific assistant general manager), and Edmund B. Rogers of Yellowstone National Park. Although thwarted by a severe snowstorm that precluded travel from Oakley to the City of Rocks, Senator Pope arranged for a full National Park Service investigation of a potential National Monument at City of Rocks. Historian Merle Wells reports that "Nothing like this had been attempted in Idaho before, and it would be difficult to identify any such project to match it anywhere else."²⁹³

The irony of the region's important role as a crossroads of overland and stage travel can not have been lost on these local boosters. Monument status and economic benefit were most severely challenged by the lack of a modern transportation system:

The area has great possibilities from a tourist standpoint, but people should not be inveigled into the section until roads are improved. For the hardy Idaho roamer the matter of a few miles of bad road should not play any important part, but if we want outsiders to visit the section, immediate steps should be taken to secure the construction of good roads

By 1938, CCC crews, under USFS supervision, had reconstructed the Emery Canyon Road connecting Oakley with the City of Rocks, and had oiled and improved the Elba to Oakley road past Mount Independence and Independence Lakes (just north of the City of Rocks). The county

²⁹² Taylor, "Some Historical Highlights of Almo and Raft River Valley," p. 17; Alfred L. Anderson, Professor of Geology, to Mr. Charles Brown, President, Oakley Valley Chamber of Commerce, 4/11/1938, quoted in "More Endorsements of Proposed City of Rocks National Monument Near Oakley Idaho," *The Oakley Herald*, 1938, Vertical File: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS; "City of Rocks," *The Idaho Statesman*, (Boise), 4/22/1938, quoted in "More Endorsements of Proposed City of Rocks National Monument Near Oakley Idaho," *The Oakley Herald*, 1938, Vertical File: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS.

²⁹³ Wells, untitled manuscript, p. 81.

followed suit, oiling the public highways connecting Burley with Oakley and with Almo. By the late 1930s, forest service officials reported a "striking increase" in recreational travel to Independence Lakes and the City of Rocks, augmented by the "increased use of automobiles and the construction of several access roads."

The push for monument status stalled following America's entrance into World War II (when military needs diverted attention from local conservation concerns and fuel restriction terminated the annual tour program) and ground to a virtual halt following Brown's untimely death circa 1945 and the subsequent closure of the *Herald*. Long-time Basin resident Newell Dayley and Cassia County Historical Society president A. W. Dawson revitalized the movement in the late 1950s by reintroducing the dramatic pageants, and publicity tours. By the 1960s, the Idaho Historical Society led a series of well-attended field trips through the City of Rocks, and the National Park Service prepared a sequence of design proposals that suggested possible protection and development strategies.²⁹⁴

In 1957, the state of Idaho classified a (state-owned) endowment or "school" section in the center of the City of Rocks as a state park. In 1964, the City of Rocks was established as a National Historic Landmark, for its association with overland migration. Ten years later, the area was designated a National Natural Landmark, in recognition of its geological and scenic value.

Proposals advocating federal ownership or control of the region, however, encountered substantial resistance from local land owners. After much local debate, initial proposals for a 30,000- to 35,000-acre unit under federal control (and possibly designated as a National Park or Monument) were rejected in favor of a 13,000 acre reserve, to be managed by an inter-governmental program composed of state and federal officials.

Congress created the City of Rocks National Reserve in 1988 in order to "preserve and protect the significant historical and cultural resources; to manage recreational use; to protect and maintain scenic quality; and to interpret the nationally significant values of the reserve." Tourism (and the attendant infrastructure of campgrounds, trails, and parking areas) has increased dramatically since that time, inspired not only by the beauty and history of the place but also by the recreational opportunities offered by the rocks themselves.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 82; Aubrey L. Haines, "An Historical Report on the City of Rocks in Southern Idaho," October 9, 1972, unpublished manuscript on file at the City of Rocks National Reserve, Almo, Idaho, p. 33. On June 1, 1971, the Cassia County Historical Society sponsored the "Saga of the Silent City of Rocks," playing on the most theatrical themes of the city's history and featuring a reenactment of the purported Indian massacre and a stage holdup. The Saga drew 5,000 people.

²⁹⁵ Public Law 100-969; "Mules, Not Oxen, Pulled First Wagons into City of Rocks 121 Years Ago," *Times-News*, 9/20/1964, Vertical File: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS; "National Park or Equal Status Sought to Save Historic Value in Silent City of Rocks," *The Idaho Statesman*, (Boise), May 10, 1970, Vertical File: City of Rocks, Cassia County, IHS, p. D.1.

The first climbers' guide to the City of Rocks, published in 1989, described a variety of free-climb and bolted routes in six general geographic areas: the "upper city" (near Emery Canyon), the "parking lot" (along the road to Emery Canyon/Oakley), the "inner city (Circle Creek)," the "lower east side" (surrounding Echo Gap), "center city" (within the dryland homestead basin), and the "Twin Sisters" vicinity. Local climbers soon kept company with climbers from around the world, vying for position on Elephant Rock, Bath Rock, the Twin Sisters, and other monoliths renamed by the climbers — and competing with stockmen, private land owners, and tourists for use of the land and of camping spaces.²⁹⁶

The introduction to the second edition of the *City of Rocks, Idaho. A Climber's Guide* (1995) includes a terse description of the "worsening private land problem," the increased conflict with a "small but fanatic group of anti-bolt activists," and National Park Service "bureaucrats' ... efforts to replace the qualities most City of Rocks visitors cherish with a 'historic theme park' approach geared toward motorized RV traffic." **CLOSED** notations checker this second guide, slashed across the Twin Sisters, Kaiser's Helmet, Camp Rock and City Limit, Register Rock, and the south wall of Elephant Rock. In defense, and in fear that the city will be closed to all climbers, author Dave Bingham urges his readers to "keep a low profile," avoid all emigrant inscriptions, stay on the trails, use the garbage cans, close the gates, and give "the City of Rocks the care this special place deserves."²⁹⁷

Conclusion

Awareness that this is a special place is the constant thread running through the history of the City of Rocks, from the time of American Indian use and habitation to the current debate raging about how best to perpetuate, enjoy, and honor the area's scenic, geological, and historical resources.

Beyond this overriding constant are rich ironies that effectively illustrate westerners' changing demands on land and water resources. The City of Rocks was once at the crossroads of transcontinental travel. It is now on one of the back roads of America, accessed only by those who seek it, who leave the interstate highway system, and travel along ever-narrowing roads, through ever-shrinking communities.

²⁹⁶ Dave Bingham, *City of Rocks, Idaho. A Climber's Guide*, (Self published by Dave Bingham: Ketchum, Idaho, 1989, 1995), p. 9.

²⁹⁷ Bingham, *City of Rocks, Idaho. A Climber's Guide*, passim. Like the campers and picnickers, climbers were not new to the area: emigrants reported that many of those who first signed their names on the city's monoliths "must have been shot up out of a gun or cannon, or have had themselves suspended by ropes from the tops of the cliffs, to enable them to record their names at a point so much higher than their less aerially inclined rivals" ["Forty-niners" by Hulbert, quoted in Idaho Historical Society (J. A. Harrington, compiler), "Silent City of Rocks," June 1937, File: Contacts and other Historical Data, Records of Minidoka National Forest (1924-1938), Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho, p. 2].

The historically significant and much-revered axel grease graffiti of those emigrants who advertized "I was here" — in Oregon Territory, at the border of Mexico, three months from home and two months from safety — is joined by the less significant and often-impugned chalk stains and bolts of modern climbers. These more ephemeral stamps also advertise "I was here"; yet Here, now, means Up not West. And the Why of being Here relates to pleasure, to thrill, to recreation rather than to economic imperative and the search for livelihood. A similar shift in land values has occurred throughout much of the scenic West.

Despite over a century of land legislation, agricultural innovations, and reclamation projects designed to conquer and to green the semi-arid West, the City of Rocks accords with Fremont's 1843 assessment of land where grazing rather than farming "would claim a high place." What was adequate water for emigrants and their stock proved inadequate for farmers and their crops. What was a tolerable climate for those passing through, quickly, in August proved intolerable for those hit by the heavy frosts of September and the frequent snows of October.

Intensive cultivation of the lands adjacent to the Raft River and its tributaries, from the 1870s to the present, has dramatically altered the physical landscape. This land has been leveled and cleared of sagebrush. The willow that once lined the Raft River, providing sustenance for the beaver and shade for the emigrant wagons, has been cleared. The once-volatile Raft River no longer reaches the Snake, drained by extensive irrigation ditches and deep-well irrigation. To a large degree, fields of grain, alfalfa, potatoes, and beets have replaced the early surplus of sage and bunch grass. The City of Rocks stands in stark contrast to this modern landscape. Within the reserve, evidence of historic use and occupation is found in faint shadows rather than the harsh lines of ditch, field, and town: a worn inscription; hints of a wagon road; a crumbled foundation; indistinct changes in vegetation, indicating a former fence line and planted field.

HISTORICAL CULTURAL RESOURCES IN THE CITY OF ROCKS NATIONAL RESERVE

The historical cultural resources within City of Rocks National Reserve most clearly reflect two phases of Euroamerican expansion into the west: the westward migration of the mid-1800s, and the settlement (homestead) era (1888-1929). Other themes important to the exploration and subsequent development of the region (e.g., the fur trade and development of the mining frontier) did not directly impact this small area at the southern end of the Albion Mountains. Tourism and recreation represent the most recent trends that have contributed to development within the area.

Although many different manmade resources are found within the reserve, their number is small relative to the number of improvements that once existed there. The area that they occupy is minor, compared with the expanse of open land that has never had, or does not obviously appear to have had, any improvement. The upper reaches of the reserve, those areas that consist mostly of rock, and slope, and timber, retain a wild appearance. The lower elevation basins have been more substantially altered. Currently, these areas are relatively free of structural components excepting various small scale elements such as fences and corrals. The once-numerous residential/outbuilding clusters of the dry-land farms no longer break the visual continuity of the two basin floors; remains of their presence consist only of artifact scatters, sometimes in association with stone foundations. Perhaps the most dramatic change within the lower basins is in the character of the vegetation. These basins no longer contain the mosaic of sage and native grasses that the westward emigrants would have encountered. The grubbed, plowed, and seeded fields of the dry-land farmers of the 1910s and 1920s have, in most cases, reverted to sagebrush mixed with non-native weedy grasses and forbs. In some areas, former cropland contains the ubiquitous sage interspersed with crested wheatgrass — the latter introduced to increase the quality of the range for cattle.²⁹⁸ Questions of vegetative species composition aside, the current landscape character of the reserve is much the same as it would have appeared to emigrants passing through during the late summer months, after livestock from previous emigrant trains had grazed the lower elevations of the basins.

The following discussion is broken into three parts. The first presents information regarding cultural resources associated with westward migration. The second contains a description of the cultural resources associated with the settlement period. The final section includes a discussion of the configuration of historically significant resources within the reserve, and suggestions regarding the manner in which they may be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. Figures for Section 5 are presented at the end of the discussions.

²⁹⁸ Disturbances to the native vegetation (by both cattle grazing and cropping) has accelerated erosion on the basin soils that are susceptible to wind and water erosion.

Overland Migration

Resources historically associated with westward migration include:

- Trail ruts and topographical indicators of trail routes
- Inscription rocks
- Geological landmarks with cultural value and historically important viewsheds
- Encampment sites.

The first type of resource, includes both small-scale elements such as discontinuous segments of trail ruts, as well as areas where natural features (either grade or topography) define the trail route. Trail ruts are sets of parallel tracks left by the wagon wheels. In some areas, only a single pair of tracks is visible (Figure 19), in others (most notably in Section 23 T16S/R23E), several pairs of tracks occur roughly parallel to each other. Single sets of tracks tend to occur in topographically restricted areas, multiple alignments tend to occur in more level areas where drivers were able to spread out and travel abreast of one another. Multiple tracks may also be an indication of the need to avoid certain obstacles (e.g., a mud hole after a summer thundershower, or an eroded boulder).

The second indicators of trail alignments are topographic restrictions — usually ridge saddles or canyons. The entry into the Circle Creek basin at the northeast edge of the reserve is a good example of a canyon restriction. Here, the close alignment of three steep topographic features restricts travel from the upper Raft River valley into the Circle Creek basin to two narrow passages on either side of a small steep-sided knoll (Figures 20 and 21).

Within the reserve, Pinnacle Pass (10CA590) is probably the most prominent topographic restriction — located in the middle of a long continuous ridge of eroded granite, and marked on the west side by the Twin Sisters. Traveling east to west, emigrants would have faced a gradual ascent on the north side, followed by a steeper descent on the south. A distinct set of ruts is found on both the north and south sides of this pass (Figure 22) through an area containing moderately deep soil and vegetated primarily with sagebrush, except at the summit, where bedrock lies very close to the surface.²⁹⁹

The inscription rocks are primarily located in the vicinity of the Circle Creek basin. A total of eleven monolithic granite outcroppings have been previously identified that contain inscriptions (10CA564, 575, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 591, 595, 596 and 597). These include the principal rock formations such as Camp Rock (Figure 23) and Register Rock (Figure 24), as well as less prominent formations (Figures 25 and 26). Inscriptions are barely visible on some rocks, having been badly eroded by wind (Figure 27). The most common inscriptions include the name of the transcriber and the date of the inscription, and are painted on the rocks with axle grease (Figure 28). A few inscriptions are incised — a more time-consuming process.

²⁹⁹ The character of the trail in this area, which appears similar to modern two-track roads, may be due to uses that postdate westward emigration. Pinnacle Pass was also used by regional freighters and probably by local residents prior to construction of the county road along the base of the Twin Sisters.

Within the reserve the most obvious example of natural features with cultural significance is the "rock city" that rims the Circle Creek basin. The basin is reported to have been a preferred campsite for emigrants, graced with a reliable source of water and a natural meadow. Emigrants on the main California Trail would have seen the outcroppings above the Little Cove while they were still in the main Raft River valley. However, it is within the Circle Creek basin that the effect of the outcroppings is most strongly felt. Although it is actually quite large (one and one-quarter miles east/west by three-quarters of a mile north/south), the huge scale of the rocks makes the basin appear smaller and more sheltered than it actually is (Figures 29 and 30). It is not until one walks from one side of the basin to the other and stands at the base of a large outcrop that one realizes their great size. The viewshed of the Circle Creek basin, incorporating all lands from the stream channel to the top of the peaks that encircle the basin, represents a historically important view and setting for the Circle Creek encampment and the California Trail.³⁰⁰

Another area that likely was used as an encampment is the basin northeast of the ridge that contains the Twin Sisters and Pinnacle Pass. Although this area does not appear to contain as reliable a water supply as the Circle Creek basin, several springs are located in the vicinity. The broad expanse of the basin bottom would have provided forage for livestock, and the area in general was a place to rest before the last uphill pull to Pinnacle Pass. As stated previously, this basin is marked by the Twin Sisters — a prominent landmark — and by the rocky ridge and series of bedrock outcrops that rim the west side of the basin. Like the Circle Creek basin, this area represents a historically important setting for the California Trail.

A separate discussion of the cultural importance of the Twin Sisters is warranted. Both travelers on the main California Trail (Figure 31) and those using the Salt Lake Alternate commented on this formation. For those using the Salt Lake Alternate, the Twin Sisters was the only component of the City of Rocks observable from the trail (see Figure 3). It marked the junction of the two trails, and for a few, the final point for choosing between California and Oregon as their final destination.

The drainage that contains the junction of the two trails also represents a historically important setting. Here, the Cedar Hills block further southerly progress; east/west progress is facilitated by a breaks in the topography of the hills. The Salt Lake Alternate enters the reserve from the east, through Emigrant Canyon. Westward travel along the combined routes proceeds up a gentle incline, and then down into the valley of Junction Creek.

The historically significant viewsheds described above are integral to the City of Rocks cultural landscape; their integrity is critical to the integrity of the cultural landscape as a whole. Consideration should be given to enlarging the reserve boundary to include the components of historically significant viewsheds that are located outside the present reserve boundary.

³⁰⁰ Although the basin does contain improvements that date to a later period of development, their scale is small compared to the entirety of the basin, and they do not impact the setting and view. They would be counted as non-contributing resources within a rural historic district.

Resources Related to Settlement

Cultural resources associated with the settlement period include:

- Boundary demarcations (small-scale elements such as fences and corrals)
- Remains of residential clusters and irrigation improvements
- Historic and modern-era mines.

As stated previously, the number of extant resources remaining from the settlement period is small compared to the number of improvements that once were present within the reserve. The most common structures of the settlement period are the fences (and gates) that mark the boundaries of homestead withdrawals. Fence lines usually are built along section lines, and reflect the pattern of withdrawing land according to government land surveys. Although the fabric has been replaced, most fences erected on private lands are still made of juniper posts and barbed-wire (Figure 32).³⁰¹ Although the area is no longer used for dry-land farming, the fences continue to mark section lines and currently separate livestock pastures.

Other small-scale elements include a limited number of isolated corrals (built with poles and dimensional lumber). These are found in isolated areas (away from residential building clusters) and reflect the use of the area for livestock grazing and management (Figure 33).

The remains of the residential clusters associated with homestead withdrawals occur in a variety of configurations. Some have been reduced to simple artifact scatters and depressions. These include the Mikesell homesite (10CA594), the Charles Fairchild homesite (10CA593), the Thomas Fairchild homesite (Figure 34), and the Walter Mooso homesite. Others, such as the Moon homesite (10CA551)³⁰² and the John Hanson homesite, contain a richer array of resources, which includes artifact scatters, aboveground ruins of buildings or structures, and foundation remains (Figures 35 and 36). Although these sites would not be considered individually eligible, they function as contributing components of the landscape within which they function as placemarkers of past homestead activity.

Only one historical homestead property, the Circle Creek Ranch, retains the residential cluster (Figure 37), irrigation improvements and an intact hay meadow. This property is located in the Circle Creek basin, where George Lunsford withdrew 160 acres under the 1862 Homestead Act, receiving a patent to his land in 1888. Lunsford sold his land to William Tracy in 1901. This parcel, plus 160 adjacent acres patented by Mary Ann Tracy as a Desert Land entry, formed the nucleus of the Circle Creek Ranch. The Tracys established their homesite farther east than Lunsford's original

³⁰¹ Kathleen Durfee indicates that juniper posts deteriorate slowly; it is only necessary to replace fence posts every 20 to 30 years.

³⁰² The properties with Smithsonian numbers were recorded by Chance & Associates and are discussed in their 1990 report. The Hanson and Mooso properties were recorded during HRA's 1995 field survey and have not yet been submitted for Smithsonian numbers.

improvements, nearer the California Trail. They spent years constructing a substantial stone house (now in ruins) to replace their log dwelling (possibly one of Lunsford's original buildings). The stone used in the construction of the home is from a quarry located about one mile southwest of the homesite, on a rocky knob that is locally known as "Mica Knoll."³⁰³

William Tracy built a series of dams on Circle Creek and irrigated a small hay meadow with a ditch extending from the ponds (Figure 38). The current property owner (Nickleson) continues to use this meadow for agricultural purposes. Although he no longer harvests hay, the meadow is leased to a local rancher, who turns cattle into the meadow to graze during the summer and fall. This use requires that the meadow be "dragged" in the spring, in order to break up and disperse the cow manure. This continuity of use has kept the meadow free from sagebrush. A Mormon hay derrick is located at the north margin of the meadow — testimony to previous, more intensive use of the hay field.

Only two mines have been developed within the reserve, neither of which was formally withdrawn for mineral development. The mines are included under the general settlement theme, because they both appear to represent "moonlighting" activities of people whose primary livelihood was derived from agricultural pursuits.

The first mine is the feldspar/stone quarry located on Mica Knoll and discussed above in the context of the Tracy's Circle Creek Ranch. Local informants refer to the "Lloyd mica mine" also being located on the knoll. Indeed there is evidence of at least nine separate excavations that extend over the top and sides of the knoll (Figures 39 and 40). These excavations are small and it does not appear that the volume of material (mica and/or feldspar) removed from the area was very large.

The second mine is referred to by local residents as the "Vern White mica mine," and appears to represent a late 1940s/1950s endeavor (Figure 41). Local informants indicate that the mica from this mine was used for insulation.³⁰⁴ Local tradition regarding this mine explains that it was developed as part of a stock scam (i.e., shares were sold to investors when there was really no indication that the mine would be profitable), and that it was short-lived. The first tradition has not been confirmed; it is possible that the owner of the mine believed that he could produce a marketable quantity of mineral from the deposit, and that he did not intentionally mislead investors.³⁰⁵

³⁰³ Charles Lorenzo Twitchell to Ann Hubber, letter dated May 12, 1995. Mr. Twitchell indicates that the excavations on top of Mica Knoll represent the remains of a feldspar mine and the quarry from which the Tracys excavated their building stone.

³⁰⁴ Charles Lorenzo Twitchell to Ann Hubber, letter dated May 12, 1995.

³⁰⁵ Because there are no mineral withdrawals for either mine, it is difficult to establish the sequence of historical development for the properties. The only information comes from local informants, who remember the mine being worked.

Recommendations Regarding the National Register Eligibility of Cultural Resources within City of Rocks National Reserve

HRA recommends that the reserve be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as a rural historic landscape, representing two historical themes and associated periods of significance. The district would qualify for listing under National Register criterion A, under the area of significance entitled Exploration and Settlement. Figure 42 shows the principal cultural and natural resources that contribute to its significance, including significant historic viewsheds that should be considered for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, but are outside the reserve boundary. The historic district boundary is the same as the reserve boundary.

Extant historical cultural resources located within the reserve are associated with westward emigration and with the settlement era. With regard to the theme of emigration, a discussion of the character of migration trails is in order. The selection of a trail route is, in essence, a *human response to the natural environment*. The individuals who pioneered and promoted various routes did so on the basis of the needs of the emigrants who would follow. They took advantage of the natural land contours to seek the path of least resistance (for wagons and livestock) and, when necessary, diverted to access natural resources (water and livestock forage), and human services (supply centers, blacksmith shops, etc.). Emigrants attributed special importance, (cultural value), to various natural features observed along the trail — usually features that broke the monotony of slow travel through a landscape that changed little from day to day.

Within City of Rocks National Reserve, the California Trail does not appear as a continuous set of trail ruts. However, where trail ruts are absent, other resources within the larger trail corridor (significant historical views, inscription rocks, and natural landmarks) delineate its general route through the reserve. When considered as a whole, the resources discussed in Section 5.1, form a continuous linkage of natural and cultural resources that constitute the *rural historic landscape* of the California Trail corridor.

Nested within the California Trail landscape are smaller components representative of the settlement period. Of the properties associated with this theme, the Tracy's Circle Creek Ranch comprises a small historic district. This district consists of the ruins of the residential building cluster, the circulation system of dams and irrigation ditches, and the hay fields.

The Tracy property exhibits several of the characteristics found in rural historic landscapes. The selection of the original withdrawal, to incorporate the water source and natural meadow, and the placement of the hayfield adjacent to Circle Creek represent *patterns of land use* typical of the early homestead period. The southern property boundary, constructed with juniper poles and barbed wire, reflects the division of property according to government surveys, and thus the overall *spatial organization* of the homestead era. The *response to the natural environment* is evident in the selection of construction materials for the buildings in the residential cluster and the boundary fences, and in the placement of the complex near the edge of the basin in an area protected from prevailing

winds. The *cultural tradition* of the former occupants is apparent in the presence of a Mormon hay derrick at the edge of the hay field, as well as in the use of stone in the dwelling.³⁰⁶

Individual sites and structures that contribute to our understanding of the cultural traditions that characterize the settlement period include the quarry on Mica Knoll, fences that mark the boundary of homestead withdrawals, and the pole corral on the Eugene Durfee homestead property. These cultural resources reflect human responses to the natural environment and patterns of land use of the second period of historical significance.

Although modern, non-contributing improvements occur within the proposed district (e.g., the modern county road), they do not detract significantly from the overall character of the area, which retains its historical appearance. Overall, the district retains sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

³⁰⁶ Within the hierarchy of landscape organization, Tracy ranch (including the remnant building cluster, the hayfield and the series of stock ponds) would be counted as a component landscape within the larger City of Rocks cultural landscape.

Figure 19. Single set of trail ruts on north side of Pinnacle Pass - view to north. ▶▶▶



Figure 20. Looking west to City of Rocks entrance near Circle Creek. California Trail passed on either side of the small conical knoll in center of photo. View is from county road west of the City of Rocks National Reserve.



Figure 21. Looking east from inside the Circle Creek basin to the small conical knoll and the two routes of the California Trail. Raft River valley visible in rear-ground of photo.



Figure 22. Trail ruts on south side of Pinnacle Pass - view to north.

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Figure 23. Camp Rock (10CA504) to right with "Elephant head" and "Pagoda" (10CA585) to left - view to east.



Figure 24. Register Rock (10CA574). View is to south from County Road - formerly the California Trail.



Figure 25. Site 10CA591— the “Monkey’s Head” - view to east.



Figure 26. Detail of inscriptions at the “Monkey’s Head” — 10CA591.▶▶▶

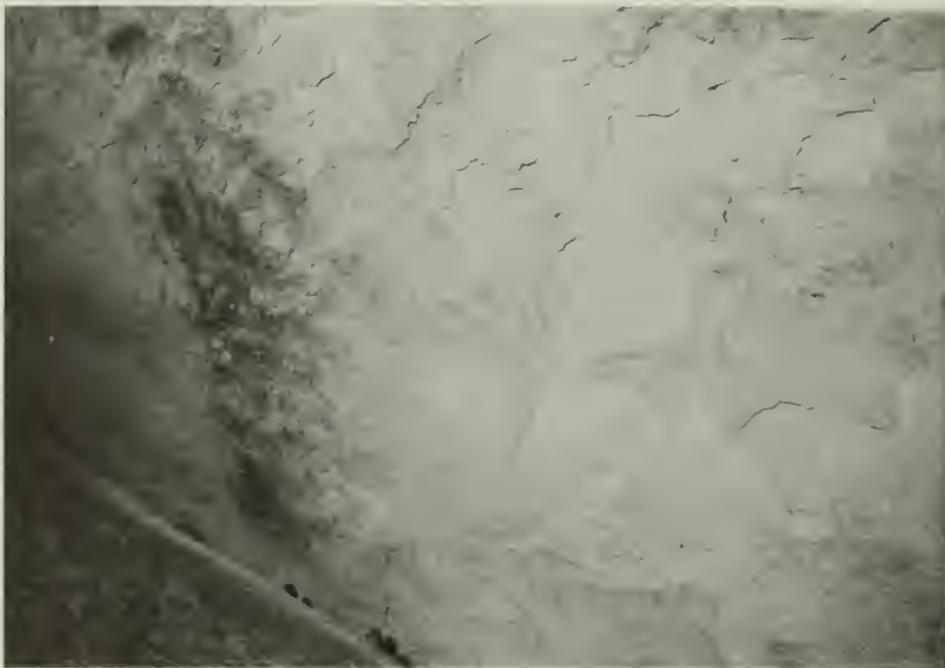


Figure 27. Detail of eroded inscription at 10CA596, "Kaiser's Helmet."



Figure 28. Detail of inscriptions on Register Rock.



Figure 29. Looking southwest into Circle Creek basin from main City of Rocks access road.



Figure 30. Looking north across Circle Creek basin to granite formations that rim the basin.



Figure 31. The Twin Sisters viewed from the Twin Sisters basin - view to west.



Figure 32. Overview of juniper post and barbed-wire fence.

◀◀



Figure 33. Pole stock corral located within Eugene Durfee homestead withdrawal - view to northeast.



Figure 34. Looking north to large limber pine that marks the location of the Thomas Fairchild homesite. Artifacts are distributed across the rocky outcrop at the base of the tree.



Figure 35. Building ruin at the Moon homesite.



Figure 36. Foundation remains at the John Hanson homesite.



Figure 37. Looking north northeast to residential building cluster, ruins of Tracy's Circle Creek Ranch.



Figure 38. Overview of irrigated hay meadow on Circle Creek Ranch, the residential building cluster is located at the extreme right of photo - view to northeast.



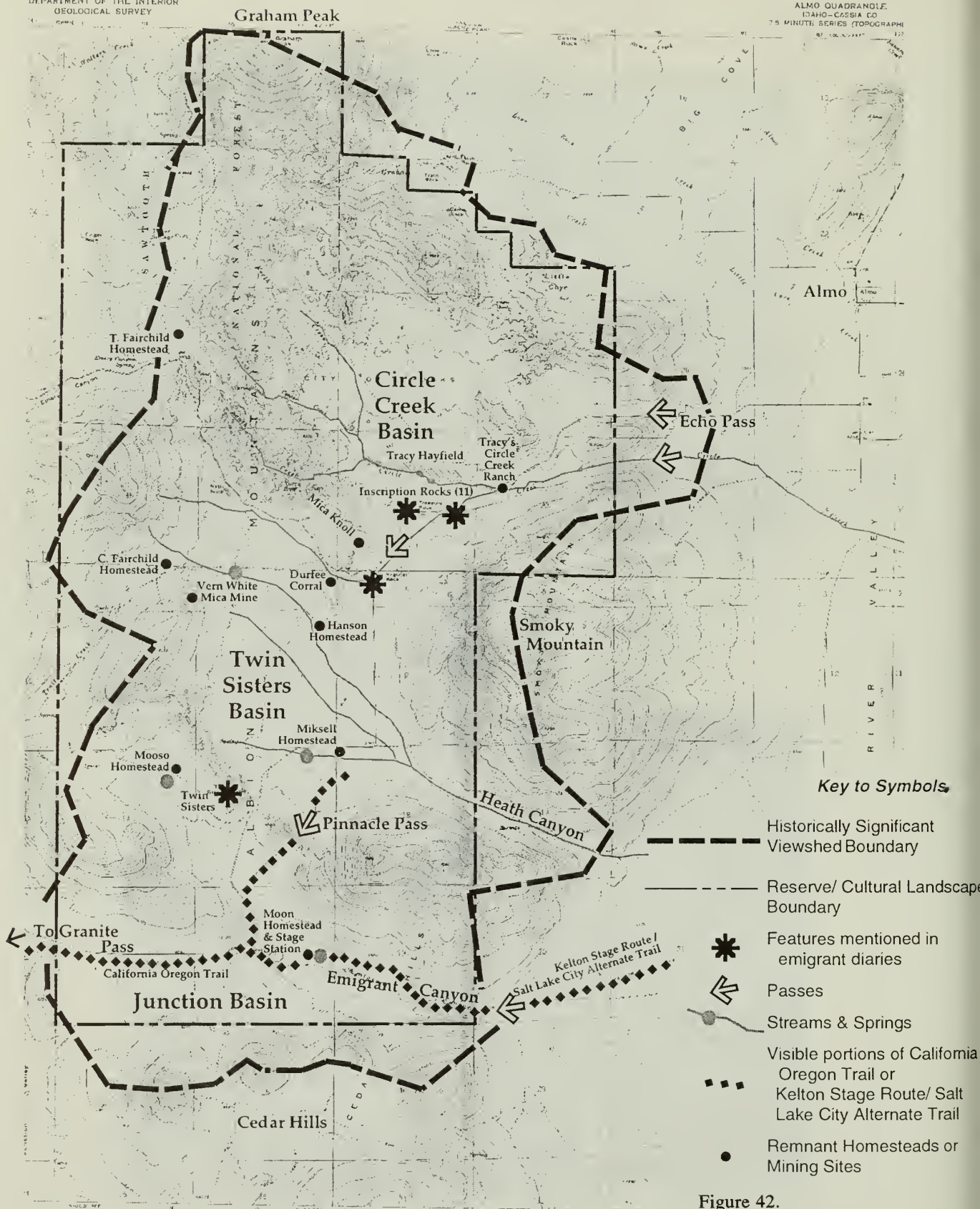
Figure 39. Detail of excavations on Mica Knoll.



Figure 40. Detail of roofed excavation on Mica Knoll - view to north.



Figure 41. Tipple and Ore Bin at Vern White Mica mine. Main excavation is behind (southwest) this structure.▶▶▶



Key to Symbols

Historically Significant Viewshed Boundary

Reserve/ Cultural Landscape Boundary

Features mentioned in emigrant diaries

Passes

Streams & Springs

Visible portions of California Oregon Trail or Kelton Stage Route/ Salt Lake City Alternate Trail

Remnant Homesteads or Mining Sites

Figure 42.

City of Rocks

Cultural Landscape

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Secondary Sources

Alexander, Thomas G., ed. *Essays on the American West, 1972-1973*. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press (Charles Redd Monographs in Western History No. 3), 1974.

◀ ◀ Of this series of seven essays, only Eugene E. Campbell's "Brigham Young's Outer Cordon — A Reappraisal" is germane to a discussion of Raft River/Cassia County settlement. This essay questions the validity of the standard thesis that Brigham Young protected Zion through expansion of Mormon settlement. Campbell writes: "the so-called 'outer cordon' colonies were established for a variety of reasons other than the encirclement concept."

Alexander, Thomas G., ed. *The Mormon People; Their Character and Traditions*. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press (Charles Redd Monographs in Western History No. 10), 1980.

◀ ◀ Includes Lowell C. Bennion's essay "Mormon Country a Century Ago: A Geographer's View." This essay expands on Meinig's description of a Mormon Cultural Region, and includes census analysis and a discussion of the impact of federal land laws (versus Mormon cultural traditions) on the pattern of Mormon settlement. Several important graphics, including: Nativity of Utah's Population; Brigham Young's Stakes, 1877; Distribution of Mormon Population by Settlement, 1880.

Arrington, Leonard J. and Davis Bitton. *The Mormon Experience; A History of the Latter-day Saints*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979.

◀ ◀ General church history with maps showing the extent of the "Mormon Kingdom in the West, 1847-1900" (boundaries markedly similar to Meinig's "Mormon Culture Region"). This map includes Almo/Oakley as areas of concentrated Mormon settlement at the northern extreme of the Mormon kingdom. Chapter 6, "The Challenge of Building the Kingdom," contains useful discussion of characteristics of Mormon land, church incentives for immigration, colonization, and settlement. Only brief discussion of displacement of Native American inhabitants. The "Bibliographical Essay" includes detailed description of archival collections.

Barnes, Will C. *Western Grazing Grounds and Forest Ranges*. Chicago: Breeders Gazette, 1913.

◀ ◀ Subtitled (and effectively annotated): *A History of the Livestock Industry as Conducted in the Open Ranges of the Arid West with Particular Reference to the Use Now Being Made of the Ranges in the National Forests*.

Billington, Ray Allen. *The Far Western Frontier, 1830-1860*. New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London: Harper & Row, 1956.

◀ ◀ Classic exploration of Turner's thesis of a closed frontier. Includes chapters on the Era of the Mountain Man — including the search for a beaver-laden river road to the Pacific - the legendary Buenaventura; on the Overland Trails; and on Mormons' Move Westward.

_____. *Westward Expansion. A History of the American Frontier*. New York: The Macmillan Company, second edition, 1960.

◀ ◀ General text book study of the Colonial Frontier, the Trans-Appalachian Frontier, and the Trans-Mississippi Frontier. Includes discussion of Great Basin settlement, the Indian Barrier, and the Cattlemen's and Farmer's frontier.

Carter, Thomas and Carl Fleischhauer. *The Grouse Creek Cultural Survey*. Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 1988.

◀ ◀ Although primarily a methodological analysis, the chapter on findings is a good overview of Grouse Creek folklife (an area similar to CIRO in its settlement history and subsistence patterns).³⁰⁷

Chittenden, Hiram Martin. *History of the American Fur Trade of the Far West*. Stanford: Academic Press, 1954. (First published 1902.)

◀ ◀ General source on the political/economic importance of the fur trade, including the importance of the Snake River/Bear River/Cache Valley trade and the general boundaries to that trade network.

Cline, Gloria Griffen. *Peter Skene Ogden and the Hudson's Bay Company*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974.

◀ ◀ Chapters III and IV ("John Bull Meets Uncle Sam" and "Our Man in the Snake Country") concentrate on 1818-1830 explorations of the Snake River country, including the Raft River Valley, and Ogden's 1825 discovery of the Humboldt River (and subsequent impacts of the route of the California Trail). Three detailed maps of Hudson Bay Company's Snake River Expeditions: 1824-1826; 1826-1828; 1828-1830 show excursions to or near the project area. This source includes only brief references to American fur expeditions, including those of Jedediah Smith in 1824 and 1827-1828 and of Sublette in 1825.

Dale, Edward Everett. *The Range Cattle Industry. Ranching on the Great Plains from 1865 to 1925*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1930, second edition 1960.

◀ ◀ A general history of the growth and decline of the ranch industry on the Great Plains. Includes a discussion of the "Northern Drive"; the winter of 1886-87; and the transition to winter feeding.

Dillon, Richard H., editor. *California Trail Herd; The 1850 Missouri-to-California Journal of Cyrus C. Loveland*. Los Gatos, California: The Talisman Press, 1961.

◀ ◀ Loveland, trailing herds to California mining camps, describes the Raft River Valley as containing "Grass in abundance and plenty of wood." Goose Creek is similarly described. Descriptions of City of Rocks, Echo Gap, "Recorder's Rock," Novelty Pass. Loveland reports that the road just south of the confluence with the Salt Lake Road was "first-rate and tolerable [sic] level but bounded on both sides with a dreadful, rough and ragged country" (see Zimmerman for similar description).

Dillon's introduction describes cattle drives into California (most along the southern San Antonio-Los Angeles-Sacramento route) as frequent by 1854. By the 1870s, Dillon reports, drives from California to Nevada and Idaho [through City of Rocks?] were frequent.

Fradkin, Philip. *Sagebrush Country*. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1989.

◀ ◀ Sociologist's account of past and current, and public and personal, emotional responses to the western landscape. Includes an interesting, if undocumented, account of the search for the Buenaventura River.

³⁰⁷ Taken from abstract prepared by Jennifer Eastman Attebery for the National Park Service, Pacific Northwest Region, 1992. HRA has ordered the report on inter-library loan.

Francaviglia, Richard. *The Mormon Landscape: Existence, Creation, and Perception of a Unique Image in the American West*. New York: ATM Press, 1978.

◀ ◀ Oakley, Idaho is one of 44 Mormon communities detailed in this study of ethnographic landscapes. Includes a discussion of those physical features identifying a community as Mormon and a discussion of the historical/cultural catalysts to this unique physical development.

Frazer, Robert W. *Forts of the West; Presidios and Military Forts West of the Mississippi up to 1898*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972.

◀ ◀ Includes discussion of Fort Hall's use as a military fort during the peak years of overland migration (particularly in reference to conflicts between Shoshoni and Bannack Indians and emigrants along the California Trail south of Fort Hall).

Gates, Paul W. with a chapter by Robert W. Swenson. *History of Public Land Law Development*. Written for the Public Land Law Review Commission. Washington D.C.: Zenger Publishing Co., Inc., 1968.

◀ ◀ General reference book to Public Land Law, including federal intent and requirements for filing and for patent. Descriptions of the "Advent of Dry Farming"; Desert Land Act; Enlarged Homestead Act; and Stockraising Homestead Act are especially relevant to the project area. Includes statistics related to patent rate under various land legislation throughout the semi-arid West (exclusive of California).

Goetzmann, William H. *Exploration and Empire; The Explorer and the Scientist in the Winning of the West*. New York: Vintage Books, 1966.

◀ ◀ Includes a discussion of the importance of early fur-trade and scientific exploration on the development of overland migration routes — particularly Peter Ogden's 1924-1930 exploration of the Snake River country, the Great Basin, and the Bear River, including the 1928 discovery of the "Unknown" [Humboldt] River that provided the critical link in the immigrant road to the Pacific.

Grover, David H. *Diamondfield Jack. A Study in Frontier Justice*. Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1968.

◀ ◀ Grover writes "a number of writers have made fleeting references to the more spectacular events ... but misconceptions and prejudices about the case still exist. This book is an attempt to set the record straight" (p. 4). The book includes a discussion of the extent to which the case divided the Mormon and non-Mormon communities.

Guthrie, A.B. Jr., *The Way West*. New York and Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, copyright 1949, renewed 1976.

◀ ◀ Winner of the 1950 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, *The Way West* continues the saga of *The Big Sky*, with retired fur trapper Dick Summers leading a train of settlers west to Oregon, along the Overland Trail. Includes fictitious accounts, based on historical research in emigrant diaries, of the push and pull factors associated with the migration, of men and women's different roles in and responses to the journey, of the dangers of overland travel, and of the sojourn at Fort Hall, when part of the party opted for California.

Hanson, Sam et al. *Hard Times in Idaho Between the Great Wars*. Idaho State University Press, 1985.

◀ ◀ Includes an essay by Martha Opedahl Soniville, daughter of a Burley rancher, on farm life during the agricultural depression of the 1920s and the Great Depression of the 1930s. Description of local barter system, shared labor, alternative fuel sources, entertainment. Also includes Sam Hanson's description of the southern Idaho sheep industry during the 1930s.

Idaho (The) Encyclopedia. Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, compiler.

Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1938.

◀ ◀ Accounts of Idaho history, folklore, scenery, cultural backgrounds, social and economic trends, and racial factors, organized by County. The Encyclopedia includes a chapter on the "Physical State" with description of the City of Rocks and of the Albion and Goose Creek mountains; a general chapter on agriculture that includes a discussion of reclamation of the Goose Creek and Raft River valleys; of Mining (void of any reference to Cassia County mica mining: "deposits of commercial importance occur in Lahah, Adams, and Idaho [counties]"); Lumbering, with physical description of the Minidoka NF; Manufacturing, with reference to Burley industries; Transportation (very general); Communications (very general); and County histories.

Idaho Historical Society. "City of Rocks and Granite Pass." Boise, Idaho: Idaho Historical Society (Reference Series No. 136), 1993 (revised).

◀ ◀ Includes discussion of general boundaries of Northern Shoshoni territory, of the 1862 attack at Massacre Rocks and near City of Rocks, and of federal response to these attacks. Also discussion of first use of Raft River/City of Rocks/Granite Pass as overland trail route and 1849 descriptions of City of Rocks by Geiger and Bryarly, August Burbank, J. Goldsborough Bruff, and James Wilkins.

Idaho Historical Society. "Almo Massacre." Boise, Idaho: Idaho Historical Society (Reference Series No. 232), 1971 (revised).

◀ ◀ Collection of newspaper and journal accounts of battles between emigrant parties and local Indians near Almo/City of Rocks. Although primarily a compendium of primary documents, this document also includes a discussion of inconsistencies between accounts and of the general exaggeration of the degree of danger and conflict.

Ingersoll, Chester. *Overland to California in 1847. Letters Written En Route to California, West from Independence, Missouri, to the Editor of the Joliet Signal*. Fairfield, Washington: Ye Galleon Press, 1970.

◀ ◀ Descriptions of need to jettison private effects — a process begun as early as Fort Laramie and completed on the final approach to the 40-mile Desert of the Humboldt (Raft River/Goose Creek region). Detailed description (p.35) of the road from Fort Hall to Raft River — "hilly, rocky and sandy — the water is good, but grass is scarce" — and of the Raft River Valley where grass was "plenty" and of Goose Creek "with a rich coat of grass along its banks." These descriptions contrast sharply with overall impressions of land west of South Pass as "one entire volcanic region, all burnt to a cinder. The rock and stone look like cinders from a furnace." Ingersoll reports (1847) that, at Fort Hall, "only about 60 or 70 wagons, out of 750, except the Mormons, are taking the road to California. The Mormons stop at the great Salt Lake."

Jackson, W. Turrentine. *Wagons Roads West*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964.

◀ ◀ Evaluation of the role of the federal government in the location, survey, and improvement of wagon routes in the trans-Mississippi territory before the railroad era.

Johansen Dorothy O. and Charles M. Gates. *Empire of the Columbia. A History of the Pacific Northwest*. New York, Evanston, and London: Harper & Row, 1957, p. 381.

◀ ◀ General reference, primarily re: development of southern Idaho markets. Also northwest transportation routes.

Madsen, Brigham D. *The Bannock of Idaho*. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1958.

◀ ◀ An important work on Bannock ethnography, with a primary emphasis on the period of contact, the Bannock's evolving response to the emigrant trains, the treaty process, and the Bannock War.

Madsen, Brigham D. *The Shoshoni Frontier and the Bear River Massacre* (Utah Centennial Series, Volume 1). Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985.

- ◀ ◀ Includes good description (Chapter 3) of Indian Agent/emigrant reports of clashes with Shoshoni and Bannack Indians in the region surrounding Fort Hall. Also details federal response.

Meinig, D.W. "The Mormon Culture Region: Strategies and Patterns in the Geography of the American West, 1847-1964," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 55 (June 1965): 191-220.

- ◀ ◀ Seminal geographic study of an identifiable Mormon Culture Region, distinguished by architecture and land use. Identifies Mormonism as a subculture that has "long established its mark upon the life and landscape of a particular area" and attempts to define the limits to this area or cultural landscape. Includes discussion of farm-village pattern of development — relevant to agricultural development of City of Rocks region, particularly relationship of historic homesteads with the communities of Albion, Elba, and Almo — and a discussion of the three tiers (temporal and geographic) of Mormon "colonization." See also Francaviglia (*The Mormon Landscape*).

Merrill, Irving R., editor. *Bound For Idaho. The 1864 Trail Journal of Julius Merrill*. Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho Press, 1988.

- ◀ ◀ Merrill traveled west to the Idaho gold fields in 1864. Relevant to the City of Rocks primarily for Merrill's response to and description of the Snake River plain and Fort Hall.

Mintz, Lannon W. *The Trail; A Bibliography of the Travelers on the Overland Trail to California, Oregon, Salt Lake City, and Montana during the Years 1841-1864*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987.

- ◀ ◀ General Bibliography, listing over 700 diaries of travel on the California Trail.

Morgan, Dale L. *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1953.

- ◀ ◀ General source re: exploration associated with the fur trade. Includes specific discussion of Smith's reconnaissance of the Bear River/Chalk Creek route from Fort Hall to California.

Myres, Sandra L., ed. *Ho for California! Women's Overland Diaries from the Huntington Library*. San Marino, California: Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 1980.

- ◀ ◀ Of the five women's diaries included in this volume, only those of Helen Carpenter (1957) and of Mary Stuart Bailey (1952) reference the City of Rocks. Of the two diaries, Carpenter's is the most complete and the most descriptive. Carpenter describes Mormon blacksmith shops along the Raft River, describes emigrant fears of Indian depredation, reports passing the grave of a man "killed by Indians," and describes an Indian visit to their encampment along Goose Creek: "they did not appear unfriendly." Her description of City of Rocks includes a discussion of churches, dog houses, courthouses, large and small houses, and concludes with general satisfaction at the interruption of the normally monotonous journey. Like other emigrants, Carpenter describes the area as heavily willowed.

Parkman, Francis, *The Oregon Trail*, edited by F.N. Feltzkog. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969.

- ◀ ◀ Of only limited use. Unruh (*The Plains Across*) reports that "the title is not very germane to its contents." No descriptions of the project area (Raft River Valley/City of Rocks) and only limited description of life on the trail. Feltzkog's introduction (pp. 18a-23a) contains a narrative description of the various routes and alternative "cut-offs."

Potter, David Morris, editor. *Trail to California; the Overland Journal of Vincent Geiger and Wakeman Bryarly*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945.

◀ ◀ Extensively quoted in the National Register of Historic Places Nomination for the City of Rocks, this journal includes poetic descriptions of the "City Rocks." It also includes more prosaic descriptions of the Raft River Valley, of emigrant response to Indian threat between Fort Hall and the Humboldt, and of the exhausted state of teams and of immigrants as they approached the last leg of their journey to California.

Powell, J.W. and G.W. Ingalls. "Report, December 18, 1873" in the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report*, 1873. House Executive Document No. 1, pt. 5, 43d Cong., 1st sess., 1873, Serial 1601.

◀ ◀ Powell and Ingalls' 1873 report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (pp. 410-412) includes a description of Western Shoshone, Pai-Utes, and white settlement in the area south of Fort Hall. Powell reports that "there is no district of country with sufficient water and other natural facilities for a reservation, not already occupied by white men The lands along the streams and almost every important spring has either been entered or claimed." This report suggests that project- area settlement predates formal survey and legal claim (ca. 1878) to cultivable lands along Goose and Circle creeks and Raft River.

Read, Georgia Willis and Ruth Gaines, eds. *Gold Rush: The Journals, Drawings and Other Papers of J. Goldsborough Bruff*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1944.

◀ ◀ Only Volume 1 of this two volume series contains reference to the City of Rocks region. Within volume 1, the project area forms the geographic and psychological demarcation between phases of Bruff's journey: Part 1 describes "Washington City to Raft River," Part 2 describes "Raft River to Bruff's Camp" in northern California. Bruff's diary includes important descriptions of Indian encounters within the project area; of loss of livestock as trains approached the Humboldt; and of the frequent jettison of personal effects. Also includes a pencil sketch of the "source of Goose Creek and Val. Rock" and an oft-quoted description of the City of Rocks. Description of Mormon traders in the region predates Helen Carpenter's similar description by almost five years (see Myers, *Ho For California!*).

Reid, John Phillip. *Law for the Elephant*. San Marino, California: Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 1980.

◀ ◀ Account of role of private property in overland migration (an inherently cooperative venture). Includes powerful descriptions of starvation along the trail; abandonment of private property (and process by which migrants traded their own belongings for superior goods of similar function found along the trail); and description of the alternative routes available to travelers: including Lassen's Cut-off or the longer, safer route through City of Rocks. (Suggests that after ca. 1850 many emigrants detoured through Salt Lake City to acquire needed supplies, joining the main stream of travel just south of City of Rocks.)

Robbins, Roy M. *Our Landed Heritage. The Public Domain 1776-1936*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1962.

◀ ◀ General source for information re: federal land legislation as it pertained to the West.

Steen, Harold K. *The U.S. Forest Service; A History*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976.

◀ ◀ General source for information on western response to creation of the U.S. Forest Reserves (1897) and the U.S. Forest Service (1906). Includes discussion of evolution of America's conservation ethic and the administrative responsibilities of those charged with conservation of grazing (versus timber) land.

Stegner, Wallace. *Beyond the Hundredth Meridian*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1954.

◀ ▶ Description of federal attempts to encourage settlement and development of the semi-arid American West — includes critical discussion of the Desert Land Act, the 160-acre Homestead Act, the Enlarged Homestead Act, and impacts of this legislation on western settlement patterns and the western cultural landscape.

_____. *Mormon Country*. New York: ??, Sloan, and Pearce, 1942.

◀ ▶ The first comprehensive discussion of the impact of Mormonism on the cultural landscape, including a discussion of physical characteristics of Mormon communities (irrigation networks, the City of Zion plat, the prevalent lombardy poplar), the role of the social network of wards and stakes, and trade networks defined by Salt Lake City rather than state lines.

_____. *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs; Living and Writing in the West*. New York: Penguin Books, 1992.

◀ ▶ Series of essays describing the American West — "aridity and aridity alone makes the various Wests one" — Americans' cultural and physical response to that aridity — including attempts to irrigate and to cultivate western lands.

Sudweeks, Leslie L. "The Raft River in Idaho History," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (June 1941), pp. 289-306.

◀ ▶ Mr. Sudweeks examines use of the Raft River and its tributaries "for three surging streams of travel": fur traders; emigrant wagons; and the pony express, stagecoach and freight wagon. Includes a description of the Almo Massacre and of the Pony Express route through the area.

Unruh, John. *The Plains Across. The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-1860*.

Urbana Chicago London: University of Illinois Press, 1979.

◀ ▶ This seminal work on overland migration contains few references to the project area specifically yet provides essential background information on changing public perception and attitudes toward the semi-arid West, the Mormon migration, and the day-to-day experience of migrants, including a critical analysis of the degree of contact and of conflict with Native Americans. Includes an important discussion of the different phases of migration, from those who intended to settle the best land, to Mormons in search of marginal unsettled land, to the '49ers who planned primarily to make their fortune and return east (thus creating a surge of eastward travel).

Utley, Robert M. *The Indian Frontier of the American West 1846-1890*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984.

◀ ▶ Includes description of the "Foundation of a New Indian Policy" that guided the federal response to conflict in southern Idaho between the Shoshoni and Bannack and white settlers (focus on Fort Hall). Special emphasis on the impact of the '49ers on federal Indian policy.

Zimmermann, Margaret Hoff and Erich W. Zimmermann, translators. *Scharmann's Overland Journey to California; From the Pages of a Pioneer's Diary*. (Translated from the German of H.B. Scharmann).

Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1918, reprinted 1969.

◀ ▶ Excellent account of travel beyond South Pass, especially response to the general aridity of land west of Fort Bridger: Peak Basement (near Green River) "is the only region during this part of the voyage that seems worthy of a farmer's notice. The land for the rest of the way from Fort Laramie to California is not worth a cent, I think. It consists of nothing but desert-land and bare mountains covered with boulders and red soil which makes them resemble volcanoes. The best thing the traveller can do is to hurry on as fast as possible from one river to the other." See Stegner and Unruh re: cultural/emotional responses to arid West.

Thesis and Reports

Boothe, Wayne R. "A History of the Latter-Day Saint Settlement of Oakley, Idaho." M.S. thesis, Brigham Young University, July 1963.

◀ ◀ This thesis appears to be based upon a thorough search of newspapers and LDS church records and upon interviews with local residents. It covers the period 1860 through the 1920s, discussing initial settlement, school and church development, commercial development, transportation systems, and cultural life. The final chapter offers four examples of local folk legend, including the City of Rocks lost mine story.³⁰⁸

Chance, David H. and Jennifer V. Chance. "The Archaeological Reconnaissance of the City of Rocks Reserve." Submitted to the Pacific Northwest Region of the National Park Service, 1990.

◀ ◀ Includes a good description of the project area environment, including discussion of changes in the natural landscape associated with decimation of the beaver population, use of the numerous streams for irrigation, and cattle grazing. Detailed accounts of rock inscriptions, trail vestiges, and prehistoric sites discovered in the course of the survey.

The survey concentrated on: the Applegate/California Trail and the Salt Lake Alternate corridors; six randomly selected forty-acre tracts; areas targeted as likely to contain archaeological sites; areas encountered as opportunity presented itself, e.g. while traveling to the randomly selected tracts. Ultimately, of the 65 sites encountered, 25 were included in an amendment to the existing City of Rocks National Register Nomination.

Although historic sites were recorded, little historical information is presented. Relevant pages of F. W. Lander's "Report of the Fort Kearney, South Pass, and Honey Lake Wagon Road," (1859-1860), are included as Appendix D. (See also the site forms associated with this report, available through the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho.)

Haines, Aubrey L. "An Historical Report on the City of Rocks in Southern Idaho." Prepared for the National Park Service, Denver Service Center, October, 1972. Copies on file at the Idaho State Historical Society, Boise, and Cassia County Historical Society, Burley, Idaho.³⁰⁹

◀ ◀ This report deals mainly with the trails period, giving an extended discussion of the supposed Almo massacre and other conflicts between Native Americans and whites. There is a brief discussion of the first homesteads and ranches in the City of Rocks area and a brief reference to Charles Brown's campaign to obtain monument status for the area.

Hutchison, Daniel J. and Larry R. Jones, editors. "Emigrant Trails of Southern Idaho." Boise: Bureau of Land Management and Idaho State Historical Society, January 1993.

◀ ◀ This report provides a detailed discussion of the original route of the California Trail and the Salt Lake Alternate in and near the project area, as well as a discussion of extant trail segments.

³⁰⁸ Abstract prepared by Jennifer Eastman Attebery for the NPS, 1992. HRA has ordered the report on inter-library loan from Idaho State University, Boise.

³⁰⁹ Abstract prepared by Jennifer Eastman Attebery for the NPS, 1992. The Technical Information Center, NPS DSC, Denver Colorado, does not maintain a copy of this document and it is not available on inter-library loan from the Idaho State Historical Society, Boise. HRA will review the report during the course of our April research trip.

Little, William J., Range Consultant. "A Historical Overview of Livestock Use in the Area of City of Rocks National Reserve From Introduction to 1907," 1994. (Copy of report provided by the NPS, Pacific Northwest Region, Seattle, Washington.)

◀ ◀ This is a "brief overview of early livestock-related events in and around the City of Rocks National Reserve with emphasis on the three country area of present Cassia County, Idaho, Elko County, Nevada, and Box Elder County, Utah. The period begins with the introduction of livestock and concludes in 1907."

Wells, Merle W. "History of the City of Rocks," with four Appendices. Report prepared for David and Jennifer Chance and Associates, Moscow, Idaho, 1990. On file at the Pacific Northwest Region of the National Park Service, Seattle, Washington.

◀ ◀ Appendices are 1) City of Rocks and Granite Pass, 2) Diary References to City of Rocks, 3) Almo Massacre Documentation, and 4) Annotated Bibliography

Thompson, Wm. H. "Cassia County, Idaho, 1849-1949," 7/27/1949. File: "Contacts and other Historical Data. Records of Minidoka National Forest (1924 through 1938)." Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho.

United States Government Reports and Bulletins

Bulletin #713: Geography, Geology and Mineral Resources of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1920.

◀ ◀ Applicable to City of Rocks National Reserve only for identification of periods of drought and above-average rainfall.

Bulletin #1055H: Tertiary Geology of the Goose Creek district [sic lower case], Cassia County, Idaho, Box Elder County, Utah, and Elko County, Nevada. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1959.

◀ ◀ Information relevant to the City of Rocks National Reserve is limited to figures re: mean annual precipitation rates (10.5 inches) and mean temperatures.

Bulletin #B530i: Mica in Idaho, New Mexico, and Colorado. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913.

◀ ◀ Cassia County is not identified as significant producer of sheet or scrap mica. The bulletin includes a discussion of mica mining processes and of mica use.

Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology. *Bulletin #14: Geology and Mineral Resources of Eastern Cassia County, Idaho.* Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho, September 1931.

_____. *Bulletin #6: Geology and Water Resources of the Goose Creek Basin, Cassia County, Idaho.* Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho, 1923.

◀ ◀ Technical analysis of potential for artesian well development in the Goose Creek drainages. Includes valuable climatological data for the larger region, much of it provided by the USFS (Bostetter and Hereford ranger districts).

Publication #229: Mica and Beryl Pegmatites in Idaho and Montana. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1950.

◀ ◀ Idaho's Avon Mining District, Latah County, identified as the state's most significant mica producer. No active or abandoned mines identified in Cassia County. Discussion of government incentives to mica mining during the World War II years. Includes discussion of mica mining processes and of mica use.

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. *Eligibility/Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment for National Historic Trail Authorization*, 1985.

- ◀ Includes brief discussion of historic use and significance of the trail systems, as well as a series of useful maps.

United States Geological Society. *Water Supply Paper #1460C: Ground Water Possibilities South of the Snake River Between Twin Falls and Pocatello, Idaho*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962.

- ◀ Identifies arable land south of the Snake River. Provides annual precipitation records.

Land Status Records and Census

United States Geological Survey (USGS) survey plats and survey notes, 1878-1954 (available from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Boise Idaho.

- ◀ The first USGS surveys show only limited development within the immediate project area. In his 1878 survey of the east half of township 15S 24E, Allen Thompson noted only an unnamed road along the general route of the California Trail. The land is described generally as "gently rolling" with "second-rate [soil], good grass and scattered sage." The north half of the township is described more specifically as "agricultural land." Subsequent project-area surveys dated 1884, 1886, and 1892 note the "old California Road" — in apparent continued use — roads "to Oakley," "from Canyon road to Junction Valley," and "to timber," as well as scattered corrals and scattered buildings, their placement dictated by the presence of water. Survey notes associated with these maps, also available through the BLM, provide greater detail re: physical improvements and the character of the land.

General Land Office, Tract Book Indexes, Township 15S 23E; 15S 24E; 16S 23E; 16S 24E (available from the Bureau of Land Management, Boise, Idaho (microfilm) and the National Archives, Suitland, Maryland (original).

- ◀ Tract book entries for the immediate project area reveal concentrated settlement by the 1880s (most often under the terms of the Homestead Act) and expansion of these claims under the terms of the Enlarged Homestead Act (1909; 1911) and the Stockraising Homestead Act (1916). Tract book indexes also show extended-family settlement within the project area.

General Land Office, Patent Files (various), Township 15S 23E; 15S 24E; 16S 23E; 16S 24E (available from the National Archives, Suitland, Maryland).

- ◀ These files indicates that barley and wheat were frequent area crops (vulnerable both to drought and rodents), stock herds were of limited size and often grazed on public lands, agricultural and domestic infrastructure was often limited to a house, a corral system, carrels(?), spring development, and minor secondary structures (such as chicken houses). Land was generally fenced with jack-leg fences. Most homesteaders vacated their claims between November and May, retreating to Almo, Oakley, or Burley where their children could attend school and they could secure wage labor.

United States Census Office, *Manuscript Census, Cassia County, Idaho (Territory)*." Available on microfilm from the National Archives Records Division, Atlanta, Georgia, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920.³¹⁰

- ◀ ▶ The census includes information on area settlers' age, occupation, literacy and home ownership. Information on place of birth provides a means of identifying the presence of ethnic communities and also (by tracing the birth place of area children) of tracing resident's emigration patterns.

United States Forest Service Documents

- ◀ ▶ These records include but are not limited to mineral and homestead surveys, administrative site withdrawals, special-use permits (mining and grazing), correspondence files, a Minidoka National Forest history, and site-specific documentation (available at the Sawtooth National Forest Supervisor's Office (Twin Falls), the Burley Ranger District archives (Burley), and/or the Regional Office in Ogden, Utah.

Archival Collections and Oral Histories³¹¹

Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho

■ *Oral Histories*

Stokes, J. W. Interviewed by A. R. Standing, Ogden, Utah, 4/19/1965, re: Mr. Stokes Forest Service Career. File: "Contacts and other Historical Data. Records of Minidoka National Forest (1938)." Supervisor's Office, Sawtooth National Forest, Twin Falls, Idaho.

- ◀ ▶ Limited discussion of the Minidoka National Forest, primarily re: special permits for small-scale timber harvests.

Historical Department, LDS Church, Salt Lake City, Utah

Adams, John. Diaries, 1912-1934. MS8101.

- ◀ ▶ Detailed diary written by an LDS farmer in the Oakley vicinity. Adams chronicles farm chores, types of crops grown, church activities and official actions, weather, local deaths, construction of farm buildings, and his interaction with neighbors. This is a good source for information about daily life and farm management (equipment used, harvest figures, irrigation systems, banking, managing stock, maintaining a kitchen garden).

Jenson, Andrew. "Almo Ward, Idaho." LR10590. Typed and handwritten manuscripts, partly on church survey forms, all on microfilm.

- ◀ ▶ Jenson describes the geographic extent of the ward and compiles the history of Almo Ward in annual reports beginning with its organization as a branch in 1882. The events chronicled include erection of buildings, changes in leadership, missions, and deaths.

³¹⁰ Only population figures are available for 1890. The 1930 manuscript census will not be available to researchers until the year 2000.

³¹¹ The following descriptions are taken from Jennifer Eastman Attebery's 1992 "Annotated List of Sources for the History and Culture of City of Rocks, Cassia County, Idaho, 1890-1940" (available from the NPS, PNWR). The annotations are frequently shortened to include reference only to that material presumed to be most valuable to the current study.

Journal of History of the LDS Church. Newspaper clippings, handwritten and typed manuscripts, index.

◄ ◄ The Journal of History is a multi-volume scrapbook compiling church president's actions, events affecting the church and church members, and members' activities. Occasional entries include information of more general interest, such as reports on weather and crops, local celebrations, and new construction. The Oakley correspondent to the *Deseret News*, for example, contributed several general-interest reports beginning in 1883 and continuing through 1899. There are a number of similarly valuable reports from Almo in July and August 1900. The index to the journal includes town and personal names. For Oakley, Almo, and personal names associated with those places, forty-six items are indexed covering the years 1883 through 1945.

■ *Oral Histories*

King, Henry Edgar (Ted). Personal interview by Delbert Adams, 1961 (MS 6230 16. Microfilm of 18-page typed transcript.

◄ ◄ This interview was produced as part of the Oral History Program of the LDS Church. Materials about Almo include conditions of ranching and a story about a humorous misunderstanding between whites and Native Americans. Much of the interview deals with establishment of Cardston, Alberta.

Cassia County Historical Society, Burley, Idaho

Coltrin, Ocea. *Circle Ranch*, oil painting.

◄ ◄ This impressionist-style painting depicts structures at Circle Ranch and the surrounding landscape.

Mooso, Walter. Family History File.

◄ ◄ This file includes an undated manuscript by Alta Mooso Weldon entitled "Homesteader's [sic] at the City of Rocks," a manuscript entitled "Life Sketch of Walter M. Mooso," By Burdell Curtis, 1981; and an undated autobiography by Alta Mooso Weldon. See also, Oral Histories, Mooso.

Newspaper clippings pertaining to Almo history. "Almo" vertical file (13 clippings).

◄ ◄ Clippings dating from 1971-1991 reflect the heightened interest in local history that resulted from American Bicentennial and Idaho Centennial activities. Many of these articles and columns were written by A. W. Dawson, editor of the *Burley South Idaho Press*, on the basis of interviews that he and his wife Lillian conducted with people knowledgeable about local events. The subjects covered give one a good sense of what local people consider to be of significance in their own history.

■ *Oral Histories*

King, Henry Edgar (Ted). Personal interview by A. W. and Lillian Dawson, 16 May 1971 (T 73-74). Not transcribed.

◄ ◄ King discusses his father's role in settling the Almo area.

Lind, Philbert. Personal interview by A. W. and Lillian Dawson, October 1972 (T 73-75). Not transcribed.

◄ ◄ The Lind family were early settlers at Lynn (Moulton), Utah and maintained ties with communities in and around City of Rocks.

Mooso, Walter. Personal interview by A. W. and Lillian Dawson, 29 March 1973 (T 73-62). Not transcribed.

◀ ◀ This interview is extremely useful for documenting the homesteading period in City of Rocks. Mooso was among the first homesteaders within the City of Rocks area and he was among the last to leave when the springs there began drying up. Contents of the tape include Mooso's family history, names of other settlers at City of Rocks, locating his homestead, crops raised, trapping, building his house and other detailed accounts of everyday life. See also "Moose Family History File."

Special Collections, Utah State University, Logan, Utah

Lewis, Lenore. "History of Oakley, Idaho," no date.

◀ ◀ This local history relies upon personal interviews and diaries in private collections. Topics include social clubs, schools, the Mormon Church, transportation and communication systems, local families and their backgrounds, economic development, and means of subsistence.

Ward, Bernus. "History of Almo, Idaho." ca. 1945.

◀ ◀ This paper relies on personal interview with eleven members of the region's first white families. Includes a hand-drawn map that identifies buildings and farms by owner and locates the legendary Almo Massacre. Topics include social clubs, schools, the Mormon Church, transportation and communication systems, local families and their backgrounds, economic development, and means of subsistence.

Ward, Dwayne. "History of Almo, Idaho," [1936].

◀ ◀ This paper relies on personal interviews with members of the region's first white families. Topics include social clubs, schools, the Mormon Church, transportation and communication systems, local families and their backgrounds, economic development, and means of subsistence. Bernus Ward (see above) draws heavily from this paper.

Whiteley, Robyn. "Pioneer Architecture of Oakley, Idaho," 1973.

◀ ◀ This is a folklore collection compiled for an upper-division Brigham Young University class — based upon interview with local residents. Contextual information focusses mainly on builders and early owners. [May provide information relevant to a local/regional context for evaluating area architectural significance. Also for use in defining area vernacular architecture.]

Grouse Creek Collection. Fife Folklore Archives. 21 transcripts of taped interviews. Archivist's permission required for use.

◀ ◀ Interviews recorded with participants in the Grouse Creek study (see Carter, *Grouse Creek Cultural Survey*) make occasional reference to the City of Rocks and surrounding communities as a place to visit for recreation or subsistence activities. Grouse Creek, in northern Utah, is near City of Rocks and very similar to the area in settlement history and subsistence patterns.

Eli M. Oboler Library, Idaho State University, Pocatello, Idaho

"100 Years of Progress." (Burley) *South Idaho Press*. Special Centennial Supplement, August 1970.

◀ ◀ A compilation of articles pertaining to county history, most from past issues of the *SIP*. Among the articles are items related to the first irrigation pump tried in the Raft River area (1912), a summary of Almo history, the Almo store, a description of the Matt Durfee log cabin in City of Rocks, and an account from Anna Bruesch Durfee of a wagon trip to Almo in 1901.

Cranney, Ariel. "History of the Early Settlement of Oakley, Idaho." January 1935. MC 13/1/6.

◀ ◀ This is a college paper based upon an interview with Mrs. A. J. Tolman, a woman of 85. Contents include a general description of establishment of ranches, stage road, and post office; house-building; subsistence; violence between cattle and sheep ranchers; water shortages in the Oakley [Carey Lands] project; and the effect of the Vipont, Utah, silver mine on the Oakley economy.

Dawson, Also William. *Western Saga Guide Book*. n.p. Dawson: 1974.

◀ ◀ This is a compilation of anecdotes about Cassia County history produced during the national Bicentennial with some guidance from the Idaho State Historical Society. Most of the materials pertain to the trails era. Those that do not include sketches about Diamondfield Jack, cattle ranching in the 1890s, the Raft River lost mine, story, the Vipont Mine (Utah) of the 1920s, prohibition, and a stage robbery of 1922. The anecdotes seem to be based upon personal interviews, but interviewees are not identified.

Estes, Virginia, ed. *A Pause for Reflection*. Provo, Utah: J. Grant Stevenson, 1977.

◀ ◀ Biographic, autobiographic, and anecdotal sketches compiled by the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Cassia County Company. Some of the sketches include valuable details about everyday life. Includes a brief passage from Emma Lucy Mikesell in which she refers to locating a homestead in City of Rocks in 1910. There are community sections devoted to Moulton, Albion, Oakley, Almo, Elba, and Goose Creek.

Special Collections, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho

Idaho State Department of Agriculture. *Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletins and Circulars*, from ca. 1900.

◀ ◀ This collection contains bulletins addressing the irrigated areas of southeastern Idaho and written at the Kimberly Experiment Station. Relevant data includes county-specific information on the dry-land wheat movement, the impact of drought and depression, changing tenancy and mobility rates, the evolution of area agriculture, the role of women on area farms, etc.

Idaho State Historical Society, Boise, Idaho

Brown, Charles. "Eternal City of Rocks," *The Mountain States Monitor* March 1926: 26-27.

◀ ◀ Brown's essay describing the geology of the area mentions recent completion of the Oakley-Elba road by the U.S. Forest Service. The article includes a four-stanza poem by Milo M. Thompson and black and white photographs altered with pen to emphasize the animal-like appearance of the formations. This effort may mark the beginnings of Brown's campaign to promote the City of Rocks as a national monument.

"City of Rocks" vertical file:

◀ ◀ Contains an eclectic mix of materials, including poetry inspired by the region's geological formations (1920s); newspaper clippings from the *Idaho Daily Statesman* and *Oakley Herald* (including 1933 article documenting completion of road from Almo to CIRO); articles and editorials re: 1930s attempts to achieve National Monument status for the City of Rocks; general reference sheets, written in the 1930s and arranged by theme, including the fur trade and trails period (WPA records?).

Idaho Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1891-1892. n.p.: R.L. Polk, [1892].

◀ ◀ Brief entries for Almo, Basin, Elba, Oakley, and Thatcher (Goose Creek) provide a description of businesses, churches, services, and population. Entries give a good impression of the commercial, transportation, and communication networks that these communities belong to.

Lind, John. History of John, Emma, and Alex Lind's settlement south of Almo. No title. Manuscript 2/463. Idaho Historical Society, Boise, Idaho, no date, (post 1954).

Additional Vertical Files

◄ ◄ Cattle Association: primarily post-1970 pamphlets of Idaho; Cattle; Cowboys: miscellaneous clipping file, ca. 1920s and 1930s accounts of the vanishing cowboy; also modern "human interest" stories on cowboys throughout southern Idaho; Cattle History: contains "History of Idaho's Range Industry," ca. 1948.

■ *Oral Histories*

Bruesch, Jake and Ida. Personal interview by A. W. Dawson, 16 May 1974 (OH 180). Typed Transcript.
◄ ◄ Includes information about settlement of the Almo area and establishment of a dairy farm.

Dayley, Newell. Personal interview by A. W. and Lillian Dawson, 18 January 1968 (OH 182). Typed Transcript.
◄ ◄ Contents include information about cattle ranches and grazing lands in the Raft River and Dry Creek areas, range wars, and the Almo Massacre and the City of Rocks stage robbery legends.

Eames, J. Roy. Personal interview by A. W. and Lillian Dawson, n.d. Two tapes, untranscribed.
◄ ◄ Eames discusses his father Henry's role in settling Almo.

Johnson, W.E. Jr. Personal interview by Mr. Robert Alexander and Mrs. Erwin Dobberpfuhl, 5 February 1970 (OH52). Typed transcript with restrictions on reproduction.
◄ ◄ Johnson spent his childhood in Almo; the interview contains brief information about farming and early houses in Almo area.

Private Collections of Merle W. Wells, Boise, Idaho and Jennifer Eastman Attebery, Pocatello, Idaho

Horne, John Theo. "Autobiography." n.d. 34-page typed manuscript.
◄ ◄ This autobiographical account of Horne's life includes information about homesteading near Almo in 1915. Horne's account is valuable for details of everyday life, including descriptions of housing, water supply, outbuildings, farm chores, harvesting, spiritual life, buildings and facilities in Almo, and transportation. Information is imparted through anecdotes that are nearly all first hand.

APPENDIX A

CITY OF ROCKS NATIONAL RESERVE

Diary References to City of Rocks

from

Merle W. Wells

History of the City of Rocks, Appendix 2

HISTORY OF THE CITY OF ROCKS

by

MERLE W. WELLS

Together with Four Appendices:

Appendix 1: "City of Rocks and Granite Pass"
by Merle W. Wells

Appendix 2: "Diary References to City of Rocks"
by Merle W. Wells

Appendix 3: "Almo Massacre Documentation"
by Larry Jones

Appendix 4: "Annotated Bibliography"
by Merle W. Wells

Submitted to the Pacific Northwest Region
of the
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DAVID & JENNIFER CHANCE & ASSOCIATES

1990

Appendix 2: Diary References to City of Rocks

An interesting variety of emigrant accounts of City of Rocks provide interpretive resources for that area. As a guide to California gold rush diaries, Archer Butler Hulbert's Forty-Niners: The Chronicle of the California Trail (Boston, 1931), 185-189, has distinctive merit. A classic account prepared six decades ago in connection with Hulbert's pioneer California Trail mapping project, it provides a consolidated presentation of contemporary gold rush literature that recognizes City of Rocks as one of exceptional interest to gold rush parties. An inspiring location for emigrant campgrounds, City of Rocks offered a site for celebration that Hulbert interprets admirably with a fine sample of songs that were sung there. As they ascended Raft River and Cassia Creek on their way to City of Rocks, Hulbert explains how discouraged many emigrants could get:

As usual our pathway is along the bottom lands of the stream; on either hand high hills rise abruptly, with black trap-rocks protruding; the hills are quite destitute of vegetation except now and then a cluster of fir or cedar trees and odd tufts of bunch-grass growing on the summits. Perhaps it is the despondency of some at seeing things going to pieces; perhaps it is the monotonously drear landscape on a part of the road far from any centre of human knowledge or interest; perhaps it is the absence of those insidious lures toward a welcome, or intriguing, objective such as we have had so often — at any rate, Raft River is not gaining a good reputation these days. Thieving by sullen and surly vagabonds among us is becoming common, and we are warned again to place guards at night to watch the horses lest white "Indians" make away with them. One entire train, captained by S. N. Harriman of Howard County, Missouri, was surrounded here by ruffians who took it bodily from the owners at the point of guns and drove onward with it, leaving, so Mr. Thissell says, fifty women and children to walk this burning road toward California until picked up by strangers. We hear rumors of even worse things (if possible!) that are overtaking the migration, not to be mentioned here until I learn the truth.

We try to enliven the way with songs, and have some success at times; but denying beggar-brothers — or even acceding to their importunities — hardly tends to encourage very much gaiety and song. The singing at our evening camps is not what it was. We have trudged so long now in a column of dust, and the days are so hot, that men eat supper and throw themselves prostrate, almost too tired to attend to the wants of nature. Yes, Raft River may be forgotten, but you can put it down as marking a turning-point in the life of this strange, great beast — this unkempt army. The strongest outfits are now to be tested; the weakest will surely crack.

References to City of Rocks in emigrant guide books provided information repeated in more than one diary. These include:

City of Rocks (California Trail)

Monday, July 2d.—During the morning's march a cold, pitiless rain assailed us. Once more Cashire Creek was crossed. About noon we struck the old Oregon trail, being the continuance of that from which we diverged in the valley of Green River, and which leads past Fort Hall. Near the point where the two roads meet were some peaks called the Three Towers, conspicuous objects, which, under different circumstances, would have merited our admiration. But almost under their shadow we met three men whose presence was as unexpected as if they had been apparitions. They were riding in advance of a train some distance back on the Oregon road, to which they belonged; and it was one we had passed long since, eastward of the Rocky Mountains on Platte River, with no expectation of ever meeting it again. From this fact it was easy to realize that still others left in our rear might also be in advance of us, whilst we had been flattering ourselves that with the exception of Captain Paul's pack train—and even this a matter of doubt—we were in the lead of all emigrants.

The deception practiced by Vasquez, whom it will be recalled we had met at the South Pass, was now painfully apparent, his object doubtless having been to turn the tide of emigration past Fort Bridger, that he might derive profit arising from the sale of supplies. By far the most toilsome part of our journey, crossing the Utah Mountains, was a result of this manoeuvre. There we encountered difficulties innumerable, of which our attempt at description falls immeasurably short of the reality. All this happened to us by listening to the advice of a stranger, rather than following that of the experienced mountaineer, Hudspeth, as we have hereto related. The latter, Stewart, from long acquaintance, knew as thoroughly reliable, hence it is unaccountable that he should have been so ensnared by the wily Spaniard. When brought to face the facts thus forcibly revealed to him his wrath scarce knew bounds. In his fury he talked of returning to the South Pass to punish the author of this deception, but when his wrath cooled to permit his better judgment to be exercised, he announced it as his determination once again to be in the lead of every wagon train.

William G. Johnston

July 2, 1849

Entered into the mountain ridge that divides the waters into the Pacific and the Great American Basin. We pass into these mountains through a gorge or ravine on either side of which are ridges several hundred ft high, very rocky in the gorge; the rockiest & most difficult road we have passed requiring great care with wagons. Here are rocks jutting out near the road of peculiar shapes from 5 to 100 ft high. Some are hollow—this is a romantic spot, the rock of course is of granite. Passed into a basin of several miles extent & camped for the night.

Peter Decker

July 4, 1849

July the 8th was sunday and we laid over and thair was a bout one hundred and seventy packed muels pased by ous and a bout fifty ox wagons this done in one day. I can see a plenty of snow on the mountains. We have no rain of any a count for som time except two or three shours just a nouf to lay the dust

July the 9th we went 23 miles and camped on a small creek up next to the mountains we croshed two or thre creek this fornoon and some in the after noon good camping places in every few miles. the road to day has been good and we got sedar and pine to burn

July the 10th we left the campe and foled up this creek betwixt the mountains and we had a bout forty rods of vary stony and rocky road and in seven miles of the plase whare we camped the mormon road coms in from salt lake. From the junction of these roads to the mormon settlement at salt lake is one hundred and seventy or eighty miles and from these to fort hall is a bout one hundred miles. We had to day vary bad hills to go over and they were vary bad for our oxons feet on the a count of the small stones and gravel the distance that we traveled today is a bout 20 miles and we reached goos creek and camped by it and found good grass and willow and sage to burn we struck a small creek in two or three miles of this creek a vary good plase to campe. Goos creek is a bout twelve feet wid and two feet deep. And on the flats thair is wild flax.

Randall Fuller
Overland Journal
July 10, 1849

Wednesday, July 17. This morning we started early, at half past five o'clock, and nearly all day traveled over rough roads. During the forenoon we passed through a stone village composed of huge, isolated rocks of various and singular shapes, some resembling cottages, others steeples and domes. It is called the "City of Rocks," but I think the name "Pyramid City" more suitable. It is a sublime, strange, and wonderful scene--one of nature's most interesting works. The Salt Lake road, which turned off between Dry*Sandy and Little Sandy, and which we passed on the twenty-sixth day of June, rejoins our road at this point.

The altitude of Pyramid City is five thousand nine hundred seventy-five feet, being the highest point between the top of the Bear River Range and where the emigrant road crosses the Sierra Nevada.

Eight miles from Pyramid City we recrossed, going southwest, the forty-second parallel of latitude, which we had first crossed, going north, on the eighth day of June, near Fort Laramie.

[Adventures]
July 17, 1849

This afternoon we passed some of the highest peaks of rocks that I have ever seen. Some of them supposed to be 600 feet high. They present a magnificent sight. The Mormon City, or Salt Lake road, that leads at the South Pass, intersected our trail today, 100 miles this side of Fort Hall.

Benjamin Hoffman
July 19, 1849

The road here lies between high & immense rocky mountains, with not a particle of herbage or vegetation upon them, but being white & smooth upon their surface. Just opposite to where we encamped was one which struck us as particularly curious. It was a perfect face upon the highest cliff around The road continued between these & around these rocky piles but the road itself was good. You can imagine among these massive piles, church domes, spires, pyramids, &c., & in fact, with a little fancying you can see [anything] from the Capitol at Washington to a lowly thatched cottage. Four miles brought us to the coming in of the Mormon Road. Half [a] mile before striking it we passed through a narrow pass of rock, just wide enough for the wagons, & which evidently had been made by some adventurers before us. Three miles farther we came to another valley.

Vincent Geiger and Wakeman Bryarly diary
July 19, 1849

August 3. Took another cutoff this week called Sublets. Struck Raft River; from thence to Swamp Creek. Passed some beautiful scenery, high cliffs of rocks resembling old ruins or dilapidated buildings.

Sallie Hester
August 3, 1849

Passed on through what I called pyramid pass. The Grey Granite Rocks stand in pyramid, mountain & dome forms, here & there towering aloft. The road winds along between them. Emigrants names are written with tar-keel & on these curious structures. Here was truly manifested in a temporal point, the figures used in the Scriptures like unto the Shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The shadow was cool—inviting and brought to mind the Spiritus 1 illustration—of the figure—the Scenery was grand & the concave rocks at the narrow pass was quite a curiosity. 4 miles on to the connection of the Salt Lake Road (the road named as connecting yesterday was a branch of the same I presume). A number of Emigrants came by the way of the Lake.

Augustus Burbank diary
August 4, 1849

we encamped at the city of the rocks, a noted place from the granite rocks rising abruptly out of the ground. They are in a romantic valley clustered together which gives them the appearance of a city. I took several sketches of them. 5 miles from this comes in the new Mormon road which goes by the city of the salt lake.

James F. Wilkins diary
August 13, 1849

An entire range on our left, of volcanic hills, for about 15 miles; and on our right, similar formations for about 10 ms. when we entered a very extraordinary valley, called the "City of Castles." A couple of miles long, and probably 1/2 mile broad, A light grey decriptating granite, (probably altered by fire) in blocks of every size, from that of a barrel to the dimensions of a large dwelling house; groups, Masses on

Masses, and Cliffs; and worn, by the action of ages of elementary affluences, into strange and romantic forms.—The travellers had marked several large blocks, as their fancy dictated the resemblance to houses, castles, &c.—On one was marked (with tar) "NAPOLEON'S CASTLE," another "CITY HOTEL," &c. We nooned among these curious monuments of nature. I dined hastily, on bread & water, and while others rested, I explored and sketched some of these queer rocks. A group, on left of the trail, resembled gigantic fungii, petrified, other clusters were worn in cells and caverns; and one, which contrasted with the size and height of the adjacent rocks, seemed no larger than a big chest, was, to my astonishment, when close to it, quite large, hollow, with an arch'd entrance, and capable of containing a dozen persons. This, from its peculiar shape, I named the "Sarcophagus Rock."

J. Goldsborough Bruff

August 29, 1849

Sept. 14th. We were early in the saddle this morning, and passing through a rather barren kind of country we made "Steeple Rocks" fourteen miles from camp where at a fine spring and good grass, we took dinner. Here the old Fort Hall road, and the Salt Lake City road, come together. Steeple Rocks looked to me more like battered and storm-beaten old lighthouses than steeples. Here we overtook a company who were about abandoning their wagons, and like us, packing. They made us a present of a sack of panola, which was very acceptable, as, from the sulphurous unpleasantness of the water all the way from Salt Lake City, we had used ours and reduced our stock of that article.

James Mason Hutchings

September 14, 1849

Last eve went to the City rocks. They are at the junction of the California & Salt Lake roads. They are white & about 300 ft high running up to a peak. They are composed of a substance resembling salts & are in a state of decomposition. A few more years & then will be leveled with the ground. They look at a distance like a ruined city.

Lucena Parsons

Covered Wagon Women, V. II, p. 279

April 23, 1850

At 3 oclock this morning we wer all stiring & shortly after we had commenced this days travel. 3 miles from morning camp we crossed a low swampy, springy piece of ground. At the head of this is a warm spring near the foot of the mountain where it boils up clear as crystal. Half a mile farther there is a small spring and 3 miles from there the road turns up a ravine between two high mountains, passing through Castle City (or Steeple Rocks) [City of Rocks]. These are a curiosity worth the travelers notice, having the appearance [of] decayed castels and lofty steeples, an ther are the names of travelers paoainted in various coulars. 2 miles from this is the junction of the Salt Lake road with the California and Oregon road. 2 miles from this is a small creek. 5 miles from this the road ascends a high mountain. The descent is about 4 miles long, and in some places verry steep. At the foot of this is

Birch Creek, and two miles from this brought us to Goos Creek, where we encamped, having traveled during the day 25 miles. Found good grass at our encampment. No wood but sage and willow brush. Saw some men this evening that came by the way of Salt Lake. They report that there will be a great many emigrants detained there till after harvest, being no provisions there to be had. White flour there was to be had at first sale for 80 to 100 dollars per hundred. They also say that it is 100 miles farther to come the Lake route.

Thomas Christy
July 1, 1850

During the forenoon we passed through a stone village composed of huge, isolated rocks of various and singular shapes, some resembling cottages, others steeples and domes. It is called the "City of Rocks," but I think the name "Pyramid City" more suitable. It is a sublime, strange, and wonderful scene—one of nature's most interesting works. The Salt Lake Road, which turned off between Dry Sandy and Little Sandy, and which we passed on the twentieth-sixth day of June, rejoins our road at this point. The altitude of Pyramid City is five thousand nine hundred seventy-five feet, being the highest point between the top of the Bear River Range and where the emigrant road crosses the Sierra Nevada. Eight miles from Pyramid City we recrossed, going southwest, the forty-second parallel of latitude, which we had crossed, going north, on the eighth day of June, near Fort Laramie.

Margaret A. Frink
Covered Wagon Women, V. II, pp. 120-121
July 17, 1850

August 3rd Saturday. Pleasant. A few clouds in the evening.

There is a high snowy mountain in front [Cache Peak, 10,350 ft.] and high hills on each side. Crossed the creek and left it on the right, and by an easy ascent reached a summit and then gradually descended to a valley of sage and sand sloping to the South East, the streams running towards the Salt Lake and either emptying into it or losing themselves in the plain. Considerable grass in strips where we nooned and we can see the Salt Lake road to the South East. In the afternoon we crossed two divides. Passed some high isolated granite hills or peaks, many of them single rocks standing in the valley, many of them rising from a level plain an hundred or more feet. They are in curious shapes resembling spires, towers, forts, &c. One on the road is well covered with names and surrounded with a grassy field. Springs issuing from near the foot. To the right these hills form a mountain range with high peaks of the same kind. The granite is much decomposed, the earth mostly composed of the debris and at the foot of the peaks quite coarse. I think that some call these Chapel Rocks.

Byron McKinstry diary
August 3, 1850

Then went through a Novelty Pass, distance of three miles, to Echo Gap. This pass through the mountains is called Novelty Pass from the great mountains of singularly shaped rock on either side of the road. There is a very large rock on the left, close to the road, that I named Temple or Recorder's Rock. Here, upon its base, is recorded many an emigrant's name. This rock may be one hundred and twenty feet high and runs up nearly perpendicularly. A little farther and on the right is another with a small prong sticking up on its top that appears a little like a cupola. I might give names to many of these monuments of Nature but they are too numerous. Echo Gap is fifteen or twenty feet wide, with perpendicular rocks on each side from fifty to one hundred and fifty high, and receives its name from having the loudest echo that I have ever heard. One mile after leaving Echo Gap brings us to where the Salt Lake Road comes in.

Cyrus C. Loveland diary
August 7, 1850

Camped at Steeple or Castle Rocks here is a sublime scenery to the Romantic the Rocks resemble an old City of Ruins there are thousands of names here I registered Mine on a large Rock which we named the Castle Rock hotel.

Richard Augustus Keen diary
June 22, 1852

leave encampment at last crossing of raft river and turn left through a large valley find small branch this leads me into a romantic place called City of rocks—the Mountains tower with sharp peaks, mostly of a sugar loaf shape—six miles from this point I find the junction of the salt lake road

Jay Green diary
June 25, 1852

. . . encamped in Granite City one of the finest natural places of its kind in the World, I banter the World to beat it This City is Walled in on every side with towering Granite mountains some peaks shooting athwart the sky like towering domes. While hundreds of piles, peaks, steeples & domes of all shapes possible in the distance looking like an old delapidated City. In a south Eastern direction may be seen a large mountain made up of Mica schist This after noon we passed through a most beautiful basin surrounded with fine mountains. To this Granite City seems to be but two outlets, a narrow gorge where we entered, and a wider space where we made our exit Here I obtained several specimens one from the Mansion house as I call it, as a token or remembrance This City is situated near the half way place between Raft River and Goose Creek

Dr. John Hudson Wayman diary
July 12, 1852

July 13. Had a nice shower of rain to-day, which, greatly to our liking, settled the dust, and it has cleared off cool and pleasant. We are in camp to-night at Steeple Rock. There are a great many names on the rocks. Distance traveled, eighteen miles.

Francis Sawyer

July 13, 1852

19th, Monday - Made an early start and went four miles and crossed Raft River, a little brook, nothing more. The other road is in sight. Went up the stream some distance and up through a canyon opposite Steeple Rocks, magnificent, conical rocks as white as marble, glossy and bright, several hundred feet in height.

Mariett Foster Cummings

July 19, 1852

Monday, August 9th. Traveled eight miles when we entered Pyramid Circle. This is one of the greatest curiosities on the road. In some places a pillar rises to a height of one hundred and fifty feet, with smaller ones piled on the top and sides, looking as though a breath of air would hurl them down. These pyramids are of various colors. The sides have been washed by the rains in all manner of fantastic shapes, giving the place a most romantic and picturesque appearance. The circle is five miles long and three miles wide, level within the wall around and entirely surrounded by these pyramids or cliffs except an inlet at the east end of about fifty yards, and an outlet at the western end just wide enough to permit the wagons to pass through. The rocks are covered as far up as one can reach or climb, with names of emigrants. We left ours with date in a conspicuous place for the boys behind. We saw the names of some of our acquaintances who passed here two years ago.

Tuesday, August 10th, 1852. Had some very rough road today. Came near getting our wagons smashed coming down the mountain to Goose Creek. Traveled fifteen miles today and camped on Goose Creek. Good grass and water.

Eliza Ann McAuley

August 9, 1852

Saw Mr. McGrew's people. Took a ride with them. We came over some very bad hills, very steep indeed. [Granite Pass]

Mary Stuart Bailey

Ho for California: Women's Overland
Diaries from the Huntington Library,
p. 79

August 19, 1852

At eve we encamped in Pyramid Circle, a delightful place indeed and one which requires the pen of the poet or the pencil of a painter to portray its beauties. It is a perfectly level plain, surrounded by mountains which are covered with pine and cedar trees and studded throughout with numerous tall white and green stones from sixty to one hundred and fifty feet and from ten to twenty feet in diameter at the base. As we view it

this eve, the full moon shining upon it, our camp fires blazing near and striving, with their lurid light, to vie with the silvery moon in brightness. Our tents and wagons grouped together and a merry party tripping the light fantastic toe upon the green, whose cheerful, happy voices echo from the hills around us, presents a scene altogether picturesque and novel.

Harriet Sherrill Ward
August 19, 1853

Aug 26th Rode on back in the morning in company with Maria Ducker. Passed through Pyramid Circle. The Pyramids resemble more than anything else petrified hay stacks. Broken the wagon tongue and we will have to walk, but we are accustomed to that

Aug 27th Had the worst roads that I ever saw. Up and down all day long, Sometimes on the top of a high mountain, and then again in the valley Sometimes crossing creeks and then wandering through mazes of luxuriant sage brush. Encamped on Goose Creek where there was plenty of grass, although at some distance from the road.

Rachel Taylor
August 26, 1853

At noon we encamped near the so-called Monumental rocks. They are a cluster of rocks forming a sort of semi-circle. They rise to a great height and are of a light grey color and look like the ruins of some enormous structure. They are situated in an amphitheatre of mountains, with snow capped summits. The rocks themselves rise out of a little plain covered with velvet sod. A small stream issues from their base and glitters along down the valley. A sort of thin mist hangs in the air, giving a dreamy appearance to the whole scene All afternoon we travelled along the same valley among rocks of the most singular shapes, some rising to great heights like the spires of churches, others of a more tower like appearance. Encamped on a sage plain near a little creek with tolerable grass.

William Woodham diary
June 22, 1854

Passed the junction in the forenoon. Ironed. No water except a small puddle to wash hands in. From the time we struck the junction till we encamped we saw 7 dead cattle.

Saw 8 or 9 more dead cattle. Awful roads, hilly, 5 miles descent, the last hill being very steep & dangerous. Emigrants need to let wagons down by ropes wound round the alder trees at the top of the hill. A mountain stream runs below as cold as ice water. In 2 miles we struck Goose Creek & nooned. Rolled on 4 miles perhps & Hannibals wagon wheel broke off at the axel in crossing a small run. Mended it with a cedar stick.

Mary Burrell
August 14, 1854

Thur Clear an warm passed the Castle rocks [City of Rocks] the fore noon noon come to the conjunction of the Salt river on northern roads traveled 6 miles further an camped in the mountains raining this evening

Elizabeth Myrick
August 27, 1854

August 18th. All safe this morning. We are agreeably disappointed in not having a call last night. Some report having seen Indians and hearing them singing. As we are sure they were not far enough from camp to hear anything more than the rest of of us the story is discredited. A few miles from camp we came to a stream which had but a scant amount of water, but by noon reached another that supplied plenty. Here a couple of Mormons have a blacksmith shop. In the next three miles passed considerable alkali. The ground is low and has a marshy appearance and pools of dark coffee colored water are in among the scant grass and weeds. It is a great deal of work to keep the stock away from this water. In spite of all that can be done, they get occasional sips. Another Mormon blacksmith shop.

Here we went into the mountains again but had a very good road. Two miles farther come to a narrow way which they call a pass. At the entrance of this was a newly made grave filled with stones. Near it a bit of board was picked up on which was written this brief account of the unfortunate one. "This man was killed by Indians, Aug. 7th. He was from Iowa and was traveling alone with a wagon and one horse." Emerging from the pass we came into what is known as Pyramid Circle. There was perhaps an acre of partially level and with a good sized stream flowing through it. On this level, and the hills which encircled it, were the most beautiful and wonderful white rocks that we ever saw. This known as the City rocks and certain bears a striking resemblance to a city. To be sure it was a good deal out of the usual, for the large and small houses were curiously intermingled and set at all angles, but it only made the place more charming. There was everything one could imagine from a dog house to a church and courthouse. While the stock was being cared for the women and children wandered off to enjoy the sights of the city. When they returned to camp a stern and well merited reprimand awaited them. "How could you do such a thing? Did not you know there might be an Indian behind every rock?" etc. etc. We were so spellbound with the beauty and strangeness of it all that no thought of Indians entered our heads. Some of us, at least, are too young and thoughtless for our surroundings. The older ones did not forget to make all the possible arrangements they could for the safety of the camp.

August 19th. A few miles from the City Rocks the Salt Lake Road comes in. A mile farther came to a creek that has the appearance of being quite a stream at times but there was little water running. Eleven miles from camp came to some fine springs that gush out from underneath a rock. Nooned here and then started over the mountains. Very long, steep hills to go down. One place in particular was so bad that the only wonder is that the wagons kept right side up. Portions of the road were barely wide enough for the wagons. Steep mountains on one

side and an abrupt bank on the other and at time very sidling. [Granite Pass] Camped on a small branch near the foot of the mountain. Good grass and plenty of cedar wood. This has been a tiresome day.

Helen Carpenter

Ho for California: Women's Overland
Diaries from the Huntington Library,
p. 159-60

August 18-19, 1857

After a few miles we entered the mountains and in 9 1/2 miles from last camp came to Steeple rocks. Which are large while curiously shaped rocks scattered over a surface of several acres. Some of them run up to a point like the steeple of a church, many names are painted on their sides one mile from these rocks we came to where the Salt Lake road intersects and now all three roads are one again.

James Berry Brown diary

August 21, 1859

The work now as not so arduous as we turned the [650] cattle loose at night, thus enabling us to secure more rest and sleep, a most welcome and needed diversion after our long journey and nights of watching. The plains of Raft River were covered with splendid feed, and after passing the "City of Rocks," a great cluster of giant pinnacles that towered a hundred feet high, decided to lay over for several days in order to rest our cattle before entering the Snake desert. The mountains here afford a magnificent summer range, the bunch grass waving like a wheat field, and with water abundant. Our camp was located at the foot of a high mountain and where we herded the cattle and indulged in fishing and hunting during our spare time. At the end of our rest, we had accumulated over 200 pounds of "jerky" which was a great luxury on our long drives.

The Cattle Drives of David Shirk, p. 72
September, 1871

APPENDIX B

CITY OF ROCKS NATIONAL RESERVE

List of Improvements in Patented Claims at Time of Patent

CITY OF ROCKS NATIONAL RESERVE
LIST OF IMPROVEMENTS IN PATENTED CLAIMS AT TIME OF PATENT
(Improvements generally completed three to five years prior to patent date)

Legal descriptions are provided only for those land areas with identified improvements. Please reference Figure 14 (fold-out map of patented claims) for claim boundaries.

Charles Freckleton (patented 1916), Sections 23 and 26, T15S R23E

- Sec. 23, SE4SW4: house, hen house, shed, carrel, orchard, 7 fenced acres of wheat, oats, or barley
- Sec. 23, SW4SE4: "All fenced"; 1 acre one acre of wheat, oats, or barley
- Sec. 23, SE4SE4: "All fenced"; 8 acres of wheat, oats, or barley
- Sec. 26, NE4NE4: "All fenced"; 5 acres of wheat, oats, or barley

Thomas Fairchild (patented 1915), Section 26, T15S R23E

- Sec. 26, NE4NW4: 80 rods of fencing with posts about one rod apart, one wire and a pole on top. Nearly all cleared for cultivation
- Sec. 26, NW4NE4: 1/2 mile of fencing with posts about one rod apart, one wire and a pole on top. All cleared for cultivation, with 10 acres planted with wheat, barley, or oats
- Sec. 26, SW4NE4: 80 rods of fencing with posts about one rod apart, one wire and a pole on top; single-boarded, 2 roomed, box, 14'x22' house with board roof covered with tarred felt; cellar made partly of logs and partly dug, 12'x14' with dirt roof; developed spring; and 8 acres planted with wheat, barley, oats, and/or a garden
- Sec. 26, NW4SE4: 125 posts set for a fence, about 2 rods apart, all cleared for agriculture, 10 acres planted with wheat, barley, or oats

Elizabeth Campbell Barker (patented 1921), Section 30, T15S, R24E

Entire claim fenced

- Sec. 30, NW4SE4: 15 acres of wheat
- Sec. 30, SW4SE4: 12'x20' sawed-log house, corral, well, and 35 acres of wheat

Thomas Shomaker (patented 1924), Sections 18, 19, 29, 30, 32 T15S, R24E

- Entire claim: three-wire fence supported by posts averaging 1 rod apart with dancers in between (along the east side of the tract), with some cross fencing
- Sec. 18, NE4NW4: house, stable, chicken coop, and pig pen
- Sec. 30, NE4NW4: corral and stockyard

George Lunsford (patented 1888), Section 31 T15S R24E

- Sec. 31, NW4NW4: Reservoir on the North Fork of Circle Creek, built by William Tracy ca. 1901
- Sec. 31, SE4NW4: Reservoir on the South Fork of Circle Creek, built by William Tracy ca. 1901
- Sec. 31, SW4NE4: Reservoir on Circle Creek, at the divergence point of the North and South Forks, built by William Tracy ca. 1901
- Sec. 31, NE4NW4: George W. Lunsford's 14'x18' log house, 14'x20' stable, granary, and 1/2 mile of fencing (William Tracy purchased this claim in 1901 - see reservoirs)

George Davis (patented 1900), Sections 30 and 31 T15S R24E

- Sec. 30 and 31: 2 log houses of one room each, stable, corral, and fencing. (Patent file does not provide location of improvements)

Mary Ann Tracy (patented 1905), Sections 30 and 31, T15S R24E

- Sec. 30, NW4SE4: main ditch 1 foot deep by 1.5 feet wide, from Dry Canyon Creek, bisecting the N2NW4SE4
- Sec. 30, E2SE4: main ditch 1 foot deep by 1.5 feet wide from Dry Canyon Creek, dissecting the W2NE4SE4, then curving south into the E2SE4SE4. All but the northwestern most corner of this tract may show evidence of the cultivation of alfalfa, oats, or barley. There may have been a house on the W2NE4SE4 as well, as indicated by a black dot on one of the maps of proposed ditches in the patent file, though no mention of such a structure is made
- Sec. 31, SE4NE4: main ditches running from the north and south sides of Circle Creek, 1 foot deep by 1.5 feet wide
- Sec. 31, NE4NE4: main ditch running through the SE4NE4NE4. Evidence of the cultivation of alfalfa, oats, or barley
- Sec. 32, NW4NW4: main ditches crossing the W2NW4NW4 and the N2NW4NW4. Evidence of alfalfa, oat, or barley cultivation
- Sec. 32, SW4NW4: main ditches cross the south end of the tract. Two smaller ditches run to the north from the main ditch, one in the W2SW4NW4, and the other in the E2SW4NW4. Evidence of cultivation of alfalfa, oats, or barley

Charles Fairchild (patented 1918), Section 35, T15S R23E and Section 2 T16S R23E

- Sec. 35, NE4SE4: fence along south side of tract
- Sec. 35, SE4SW4: "All fenced" and 10 acres of oats, wheat, rye, or barley
- Sec. 35, SW4SE4: "All fenced" and 20 acres of oats, wheat, rye, or barley
- Sec. 35, SE4SE4: "All fenced" and 20 acres of oats, wheat, rye, or barley. Three-room house, barn, hog pen, hen house, and cellar
- Sec. 2, Lot 1: "All fenced" and 6 acres of wheat, oats, barley, or rye. Spring with house over it (aka "milk seller")
- Sec. 2, Lot 2: "All fenced" and 7 acres of wheat, oats, barley, or rye
- Sec. 2, Lot 3: "All fenced" and 7 acres of wheat, oats, barley, or rye
- Sec. 2, SE4SW4: 10 acres fenced and 10 acres of wheat, oats, barley, or rye
- Sec. 2, SW4SE4: 10 acres fenced and 10 acres of wheat, oats, barley, or rye

John Flowers (patented 1917), Section 31 T15S R24E

Entire claim fenced

- Sec. 31, SE4SW4: 7 acres of wheat, rye, oats, or barley
- Sec. 31, SW4SE4: 6 acres of wheat, rye, oats, or barley
- Sec. 31, NE4SE4: house, well, shed, carrels, closet, and hen house
- Sec. 31, SE4SE4: 24 acres of wheat, rye, oats, or barley

Clara Campbell, (patented 1911), Section 32, T15S R24E

- Entire claim: three-wire fence supported by good posts 2 rods apart, with 4 dancers between
- Sec. 32, SE4NW4: one-room log house, 10 logs high with a dirt roof

Eugean Durfee, (patented 1919), Section 1 T16S R23E; Sections 6 and 7 T16S R24E

Entire claim fenced (not described)

- Sec. 1, Lot 1: 1/4 acre of corn, beets, potatoes, barley, wheat, or alfalfa
- Sec. 1, SE4SE4: 9 acres of corn, beets, potatoes, barley, wheat, or alfalfa
- Sec. 6, Lot 3: 4 acres of corn, beets, potatoes, barley, wheat, or alfalfa; house; carrel; hog pen; and calf pasture
- Sec. 6, Lot 4: 8 acres of corn, beets, potatoes, barley, wheat, or alfalfa
- Sec. 7, NE4NW4: 16 acres of corn, beets, potatoes, barley, wheat, or alfalfa

Margaret Hansen, Sections 1 and 12 T16S 23E and Section 7 16S 24E

- Sec. 1, SW4SE4: Reservoir on the South Fork of Circle Creek, 300 feet long, 10 feet high, and backing water up about 150 feet. Also, main ditch along south edge of tract, 2.5 feet across the top and 18 inches on the bottom, with a capacity of about 200 inches
- Sec. 1, SE4SE4: main ditch along south edge of tract, 2.5 feet across the top and 18 inches on the bottom, with a capacity of about 200 inches
- Sec. 12, SW4SW4: Reservoir (see Section 1, SWSE, above)
- Sec 12, S2S2: Main ditch (see Section 1, SESE, above)
- Sec. 7, Lots 1-4: Main ditch with smaller ditches, 1.5 - 2 feet wide across the top, 1 foot wide across the bottom, and 1 foot deep, with a capacity of 50 inches each, and cultivation throughout

John Hansen (patented 1917), Sections 1 and 12 T16S R23E

Entire claim fenced (not described)

- Sec. 1, SW4SE4: 9 acres of wheat and rye
- Sec. 12, NW4NE4: 9 acres of wheat and rye. Also house, barn, sheds, shop, granary, carrels, hen house, pig pen, "meethouse", spring, and hay yards
- Sec. 12, NE4NE4: 30 acres of wheat and rye
- Sec. 12, SE4NE4: 40 acres of wheat and rye
- Sec. 12, SW4SE4: 12 acres of wheat and rye
- Sec. 12, SE4SW4: 37 acres of wheat and rye

Martha (Rogers) Garner (patented 1916), Sections 1 and 12 T16S R23E

Entire claim fenced (not described)

- Sec. 1, SE4SW4: 1 acre of wheat, oats, barley, or corn. Also, house, barn, and shed
- Sec. 1, SE4SW4: 30 acres of wheat, oats, barley, or corn
- Sec. 12, NW4NW4: 10 acres of wheat, oats, barley, or corn
- Sec. 12, NE4NW4: 5 acres of wheat, oats, barley, or corn
- Sec. 12, SW4NE4: 2.5 acres of wheat, oats, barley, or corn

Henry Jones (patented 1922), Sections 11, 12, and 13 T16S R23E

Entire claim fenced with barbed wire and cedar posts

- Sec. 11, SE4SE4: 3 acres of barley or rye
- Sec. 12, NW4SW4: 18 acres of barley or rye
- Sec. 12, SW4NW4: 4 acres of barley or rye
- Sec. 12, SW4SW4: 18 acres of barley or rye. Also, log and frame house, cellar, and developed spring - unclear whether Jones shared the reservoir built by Hansen
- Sec. 13, NW4NW4: barn, hay yard, hen house, and pig pen

Sherman Wilcox (patented 1919), Sections 10 and 11, T16S R23E

- Sec. 10, SE4NE4: 160 rod of fencing and 5 acres of wheat, rye, barley, timothy, or potatoes
Sec. 10, NE4SE4: 80 rod of fencing and 10 acres of wheat, rye, barley, timothy, or potatoes
Sec. 10, SE4SE4: 160 rod of fencing and 15 acres of wheat, rye, barley, timothy, or potatoes. Also, 18'x35' rock and log stable, coops, pens, and corrals
Sec. 11, SW4NW4: 160 rod of fencing and 5 acres of wheat, rye, barley, timothy, or potatoes. Also, 24'x24' log house and cellar
Sec. 11, NW4SW4: 80 rod of fencing and 20 acres of wheat, rye, barley, timothy, or potatoes
Sec. 11, SW4SW4: 80 rod of fencing and 20 acres of wheat, rye, barley, timothy, or potatoes

Walter Mooso (patented 1916), Sections 13 and 14, T16S R23E

Entire claim fenced (not described)

- Sec. 13, NW4SW4: 6 acres of barley, wheat, or rye
Sec. 14, NW4NE4: 10 acres cultivated
Sec. 14, NE4NE4: 10 acres of barley, wheat, or rye
Sec. 14, SW4NE4: 30 acres of barley, wheat, or rye
Sec. 14, SE4NE4: 14 acres of barley, wheat, or rye. Also, house, cellar, well, pig pen, hen house, carrel, and barn
Sec. 14, NE4SE4: 6 acres of barley, wheat, or rye

Merritt Osterhout (patented 1919), Section 13, T16S R23E

Entire claim fenced (not described)

- Sec. 13, NE4NW4: 6 acres of wheat, oats, barley, or rye
Sec. 13, NW4NE4: 40 acres of wheat, oats, barley, or rye. Also, house, cellar, well, 14'x26' shed, hen house, and closet
Sec. 13, SW4NE4: 4 acres of wheat, oats, barley, or rye

Samuel Mikesell (patented 1917), Section 13 16S 23E and Sections 7 and 18 16S 24E

Entire claim fenced (not described)

- Sec. 13, NE4NE4: house; well; windmill; cellar; closet; hog pasture; and 36 acres of wheat
Sec. 13, SE4NE4: 38 acres of wheat
Sec. 7, SE4SW4: 40 acres cleared for cultivation (1917)
Sec. 18, Lot 1: barn; granary; shed; hen house; hay carrel; and 42.72 acres of wheat
Sec. 18, Lot 2: "all cleared on tillable land"
Sec. 18, NE4NW4: 35 acres of wheat

Stella Holley (patented 1920), Sections 7, 17, and 18, T16S R24E

Entire claim fenced (not described)

- Sec. 17, SW4NW4: 1 acre of alfalfa and timothy; house; carrels

John Holley (patented by widow Stella Holley in 1919), Sections 17 and 18, T16S R24E

Claim partially enclosed with 320 rods of fence (not described)

- Sec. 17, NW4SW4: 2 acres in potatoes, sugar beets, or calf pasture. Also 14' x 18' hewed log house

John Moon (patented 1916), Section 24, T16S R23E

Entire claim fenced with three-wire fence

Sec. 24, NW4NE4: 20 acres of wheat, barley or oats

Sec. 24, SW4NE4: 35 acres of wheat, barley or oats

Sec. 24, SE4NE4: 5 acres of wheat, barley or oats by John W. Moon

Sec. 24, NE4SE4: house, granary, barn, shed, well, hen house, pig pen, closet, and hay carrel. 8 acres of wheat, barley, or oats

Frank Trunkey (patented 1918), Sections 22, 23, and 27 T16S R23E

Entire claim fenced (not described)

Sec. 23, NW4SW4: 32 acres of rye or wheat

Sec. 23, NE4SW4: 35 acres of rye or wheat

Sec. 23, SE4SW4: 15 acres of rye or wheat

Sec. 27, NW4NE4: 30 acres of rye or wheat. Also house, barn, "well cellar," closet

Sec. 27, SW4NE4: 30 acres cleared but not planted

Ernest Sparks (patented 1918 [Enlarged Homestead]), Sections 23 and 24, T16S R23E

Entire Claim fenced with three-wire fence

Sec. 24, SE4SW4: 35 acres of potatoes, wheat, barley, oats, sweet clover, or beets

Joseph R. Moon (patented 1925), Sections 24 and 25, T16S R23E

Three sides of claim fenced in three-wire with cedar posts

Sec. 24, W2SE4: 40 acres of of rye and some barley

Sec. 25, NE4NE4: Dam and small spring "in a gulch which runs in a north-easterly direction. This gulch is very steep, the slope being about 50 feet in 100 feet. [Moon] built a dam across the gulch below the spring 10 feet high, 40 feet long, and has dug a trench in the bottom of the gulch to open up the spring. From this dam he built a ditch 2 feet wide and 1 foot deep to a point about and south of the SE4 of the tract, whence one laterally runs westerly and one northerly..."

John Eames (patented 1918), Section 24, T16S R23E and Sections 19 and 30, T16S R24E

Sec. 19, Lot 3: 10 acres of barley

Sec. 19, Lot 4: 10 acres of barley

Sec. 19, NE4SW4: 10 acres of barley

Sec. 19, SE4SW4: 20 acres of barley. Also house, barn, spring, cellar

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